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6d FORTNIGHTLY

Edited by Sir John Hammerton

JULY 24 1942

AMERICA IN N. IRELAND: a sentry on board a U.S. destroyer which has put in at the great American naval base that has been constructed at Londonderry, second city of Northern Ireland. A year ago Magee's Fields, as the site was named locally, was a stretch of tufted and boggy pastureland; now, where only sheep used to roam, American ships engaged in the Battle of the Atlantic are repaired and refitted. Even before the base was officially finished ships put in for overhaul, the first arrival being the U.S. converted fishing schooner Albatross, on January 17. The Commandant, Capt. Larson, says: "Give us any ship that's in trouble, and we'll see it home." *Photo, Planet News*

ALONG THE BATTLE FRONTS

by Our Military Critic, Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

THE defeat of the Eighth Army in Libya and its retreat far into Egypt was serious and alarming—all the more so because danger was unexpected. The Allied main bases in the Middle East, and in particular the chief base of our fleet in the Mediterranean at Alexandria were suddenly threatened. Not until Rommel, by July 5, was brought to a standstill at El Alamein, and Auchinleck had gained time for reinforcements to arrive, did the situation begin to clear. At the same time, the fall of Sevastopol in spite of its magnificent resistance, which had cost the enemy such heavy losses, represented Axis progress, liberating the troops employed in the siege.

The long-expected German offensive in Russia has opened, and after a slow start, in which it suffered heavy losses, it has had an alarming measure of success. When the Don was crossed and Voronezh reached in the first week of July, Timoshenko's southern armies, which bar the way to Caucasia, were in obvious danger.

In the Far East I am inclined to think that a Russo-Japanese War may be the next development, but the situation still remains somewhat obscure.

EGYPT After the fall of Tobruk it would have been courting further disaster for Auchinleck, with the depleted Eighth Army, to attempt to stand on the frontier against Rommel's greatly superior forces. There was no alternative but to withdraw with all speed to a position where reinforcements could most quickly reach him, and where Rommel's opportunities for enveloping manoeuvre would be reduced. Attempts to delay pursuit by taking up rearguard positions would have been highly dangerous against an enemy possessing speed of movement and the wide spaces of the desert in which to manoeuvre.

It was hoped that a stand to gain time might be made in Wavell's old defences at Mersa Matruh, a position which, on account of its good water supplies, it was important to deny to the enemy. But the speed and strength of Rommel's pursuit gave no time for the reorganization of the position or for the arrival of adequate reinforcements. The attempted stand might easily have led to catastrophe but for the magnificent fight of the battle-experienced and fresh New Zealand division.

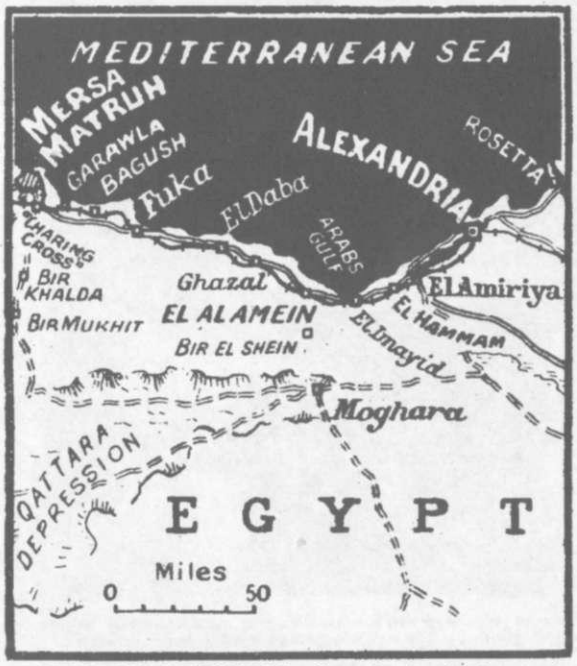
'AUK' AT THE FRONT. On June 25 Gen. Auchinleck decided to assume command personally of the 8th Army in succession to Gen. Ritchie. His Battle H.Q. is, it will be seen, a covered lorry.
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Further retreat was necessary to El Alamein, where the coastal plain is at its narrowest and where outflanking movements are confined by the marshy Qattara depression. To El Alamein reinforcements and supplies had shorter distances to travel, and another joint was added to Rommel's immensely long line of communications.

Auchinleck had not left the pursuer entirely unopposed, but the opposition offered was mobile, not static. Small fast-moving "Jock" columns harassed the enemy, striking, as opportunity offered, at his supply services and flanking detachments. The R.A.F., too, redoubled their attacks to cause the maximum amount of damage and delay. Delay probably was slight, but damage inflicted was bound to reduce the enemy's residual strength and power of manoeuvre which called for great expenditure of petrol.

The retreat was evidently a difficult and critical operation, and quite apart from any question of General Ritchie's competence, Auchinleck was no doubt right to assume direct command himself. It was a situation in which the Commander had to be solely responsible for every decision and the one who could give orders for movements of reinforcements. It was not a situation which admitted consultation, explanations, or calls for help.

Mr. Churchill has told us that Rommel's offensive was primarily a forestalling operation, and although I did not know we were preparing for a summer offensive, I had from the first believed that was its intention.



BATTLE OF ALEXANDRIA. Here is the battleground where the fate of Egypt may well be decided. Particularly fierce was the fighting near El Alamein, where there is a gap of only 45 miles between the Mediterranean and the Qattara depression. *Courtesy of The Daily Telegraph*

The intensified attacks on Malta had indicated, of course, that Rommel was being heavily reinforced, but their slackening off before he struck suggested that he had no far-reaching object in view. It seemed more probable that he aimed only at defeating Ritchie's army and driving it back across the frontier, thereby making his own position secure during the period in which all available Axis resources would be needed in Russia. That Rommel was prepared to exploit success to the utmost is characteristic of the man, but he certainly carried exploitation to the point of risk. The doubtful factor was whether he was relying on the cooperation of a Crete-based, airborne force to which, when he closed on Egypt, he would be able to give fighter protection that could not be provided from Crete. I confess I felt anxiety on this point, especially when it appeared that Rommel was husbanding his Luftwaffe reserves and not disputing to the utmost the air superiority of the R.A.F. This certainly suggested that he might be keeping them for cooperation with an airborne attack. Reports that the Cretan force had been transferred to Russia could not be relied on, and no doubt the threat it implied must have affected Auchinleck's dispositions.

That Rommel arrived at El Alamein with troops nearing exhaustion and having suffered from air attacks is evident. Auchinleck's seizure of opportunities for counter-attack immediately was therefore obviously right.

LOADING A TANK with refilled machine-gun belts—a frequent scene in the battle in the Western Desert. On June 15 the 8th Army lost 230 tanks out of the 300 engaged.
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Rommel naturally attacked without hesitation what he believed to be a badly-shaken army, but he was in a better condition to deal with hastily-organized static defences than to conduct the battle of rapid manoeuvre which Auchinleck imposed on him. To take advantage of the enemy's exhaustion and limited immediately-available supplies, and not merely to stop him, was clearly Auchinleck's policy.

The R.A.F. and S.A.A.F. cooperation was altogether admirable, and evidently their direct intervention in the battle had a most heartening effect on our tired troops as well as achieving concrete results.

RUSSIA With the evacuation of Sevastopol on July 3 ended one of the most glorious sieges in history. Seldom or never has a fortress been subjected to such prolonged and intensive assaults or to assaults backed with such a weight of armament.

Seldom, too, has the resistance of the besieged served so valuable a strategic purpose, contributing as it did to delay, weaken, and disarrange the German plans for a great offensive.

That offensive has now been launched on the central and southern sectors, but the maintenance of its energy and ultimate scope may be affected by the costly preliminary operations necessitated by the Russian resistance at Kerch and Sevastopol and by Timoshenko's forestalling Kharkov offensive. Kerch and Sevastopol caused delays and cost the Germans a heavy price, and it took three major counter-attacks to drive Timoshenko from the threatening position he had won. The third did succeed, by crossing the Upper Donetz, in establishing a starting line for a major offensive on this part of the front, but Timoshenko has regrouped his troops behind the Oskol river and is ready to meet attack. It seems almost certain, however, that the main German thrust will be delivered farther south, with the Donetz basin and Rostov as immediate objectives, but with the ultimate aim of cutting off the Red Army from its vital oil sources in the Caucasus.

The offensives which have opened in the Kursk and Bielgorod regions north of Kharkov have succeeded in attaining their object of establishing a footing across the Don and of interrupting Russian lateral railway communications between Moscow and Rostov in order to protect the main thrust, when it is delivered, from counter-attack on its left flank. The attack delivered at Gzhatsk at the head of the salient pointing towards Moscow appears to have been on a smaller scale, and may have been intended mainly to imply a threat to the capital which would compel the retention of large Russian reserves to ensure its security. None of these last three offensives has met with the immediate initial success which almost always was achieved by German thrusts last year. Only after heavy fighting and by reckless expenditure of Panzer troops did the Kursk offensive result in a breakthrough.

The opening phases of the German offensive have certainly been of a very different order from those of last year which were marked by deep Panzer penetrations and Russian retreats. A period of hard slogging, close-range fighting appears to be probable in which the Russians are in no way inferior to their opponents. The Germans, however, still retain the initiative, and though their strength has undoubtedly diminished they can, with the advantages of the initiative, mass for attack at selected points. Their main offensive may not yet even have started, and when it does one must

RUSSIAN FRONT, illustrating in particular the direction of Von Bock's drive between Kursk and Kharkov against Voronezh and the Don. *By courtesy of The Times*

expect that it will be made with maximum violence and with great reserves to maintain its impetus. The liberation of considerable forces from the Crimean theatre may have been awaited in order to strengthen the reserves of the main blow.

On the whole, the situation is not too discouraging. Last year the Germans were strong enough to carry out offensives with three different geographical objectives—Leningrad, Moscow, and the Ukraine industrial areas, with Moscow as the chief. This year it seems probable that, initially at least, the main offensive will be in the south, combined with a holding offensive on the Moscow front; and that on the Leningrad front the Germans will remain strategically on the defensive, content merely to hold their positions investing the city.

That Russia will prove even stronger and more determined than last year is evident, and she may be expected to retain general air superiority—though not to an extent that would prevent the Germans achieving temporary local superiority at their selected places.

FAR EAST

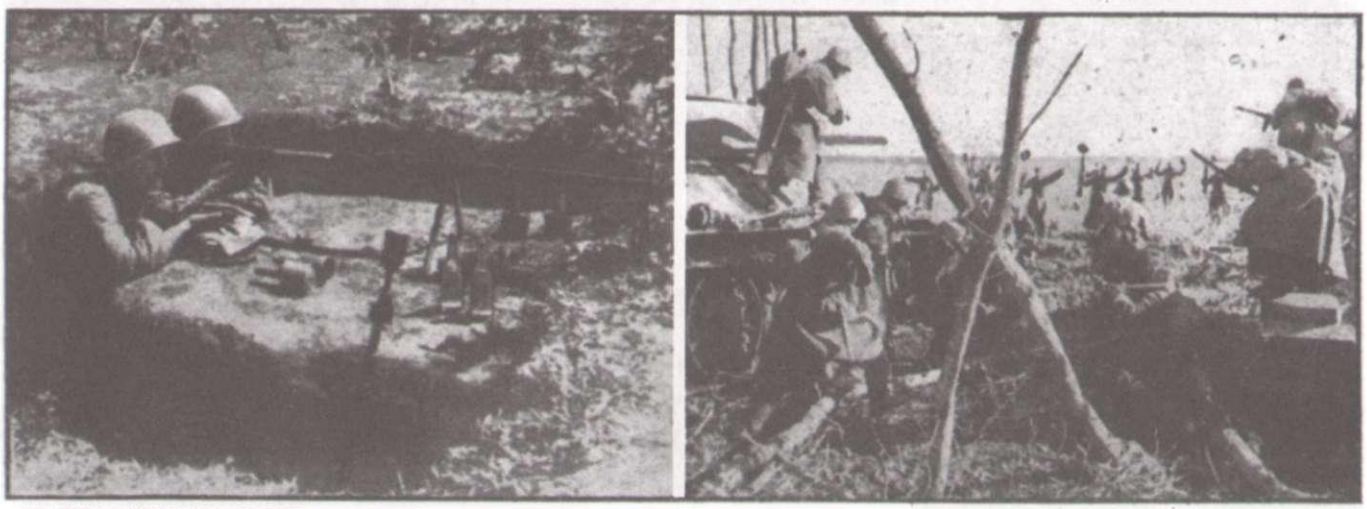
There was a marked lull in Far East operations during the fortnight ending July 8.

In Burma, owing to supply difficulties during the wet season, the Japanese have been compelled to withdraw their advanced troops to areas with railways and good roads. The threat of invasion of India by land is in consequence temporarily removed.

The whole situation is one for speculation rather than for comment on events, and speculation must be confined to courses open to the enemy. My own opinion is that, in view of her naval losses, Japan cannot risk further ambitious amphibious enterprises under existing circumstances; and that if she had contemplated major amphibious attacks on India or Australia they must be abandoned or postponed, especially as both countries have been heavily reinforced. This would leave the bulk of the Japanese Army uncommitted. How could she use it?

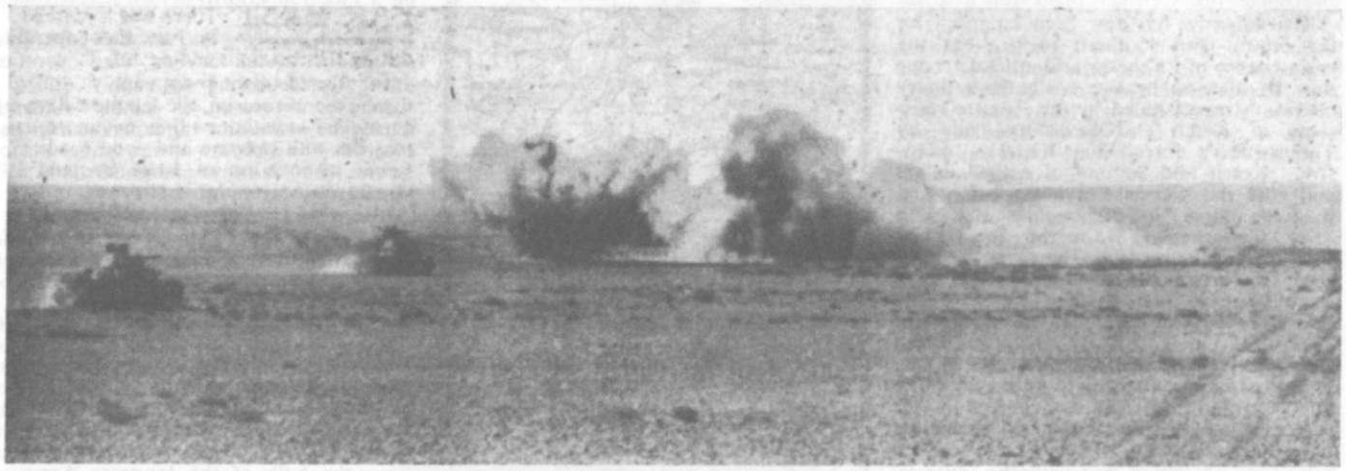
Part of it she is using to secure control of the airfields in China from which her home bases might be attacked, but is she likely to use her whole surplus strength in an attempt to crush Chiang Kai-shek while his supply lines are cut? In spite of what some Japanese spokesmen are reported to have said, I think it improbable. Japan has already learnt that even when Chiang was weakest his complete destruction evaded her. China under present circumstances, except in the matter of airfields, is no immediate threat to Japan; and her future depends on the progress of the Allied cause as a whole.

On the other hand, Japan has shown how sensitive she is for the security of her home bases against air attack, and Vladivostok remains a potential danger. While Russia is engaged in her struggle with Germany and the Japanese Army is not largely committed, there is surely an apparent opportunity for eliminating the danger, while at the same time assisting her confederate in the World War. There are reports that Japan is reinforcing her Manchurian army, and I confess the main factors in the strategical situation make me credit them. Japan's Aleutian enterprise would seem to be directed against Russia as much as against the U.S.A. The positions Japan has won in the south have gone far to prevent direct assistance being given to Russia by her allies should she be attacked. Japan must husband her naval and air resources for the defence of her gains, but it is on them rather than her army that she relies for retaining the positions won.

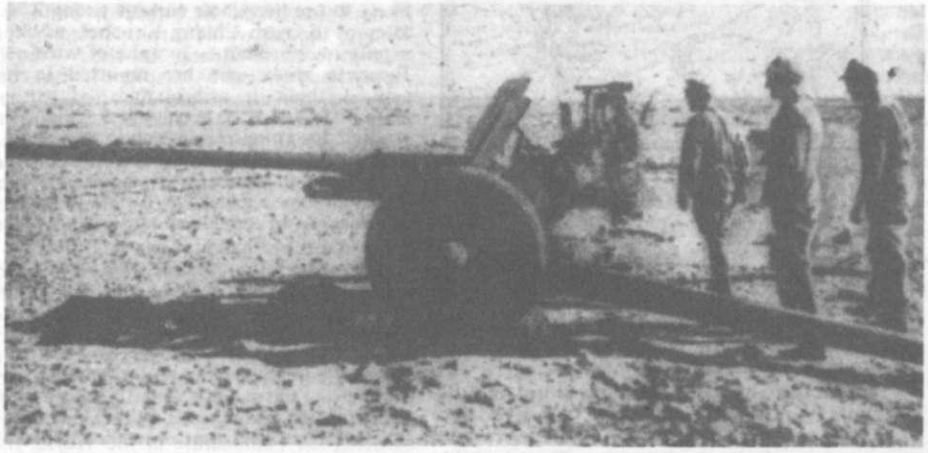


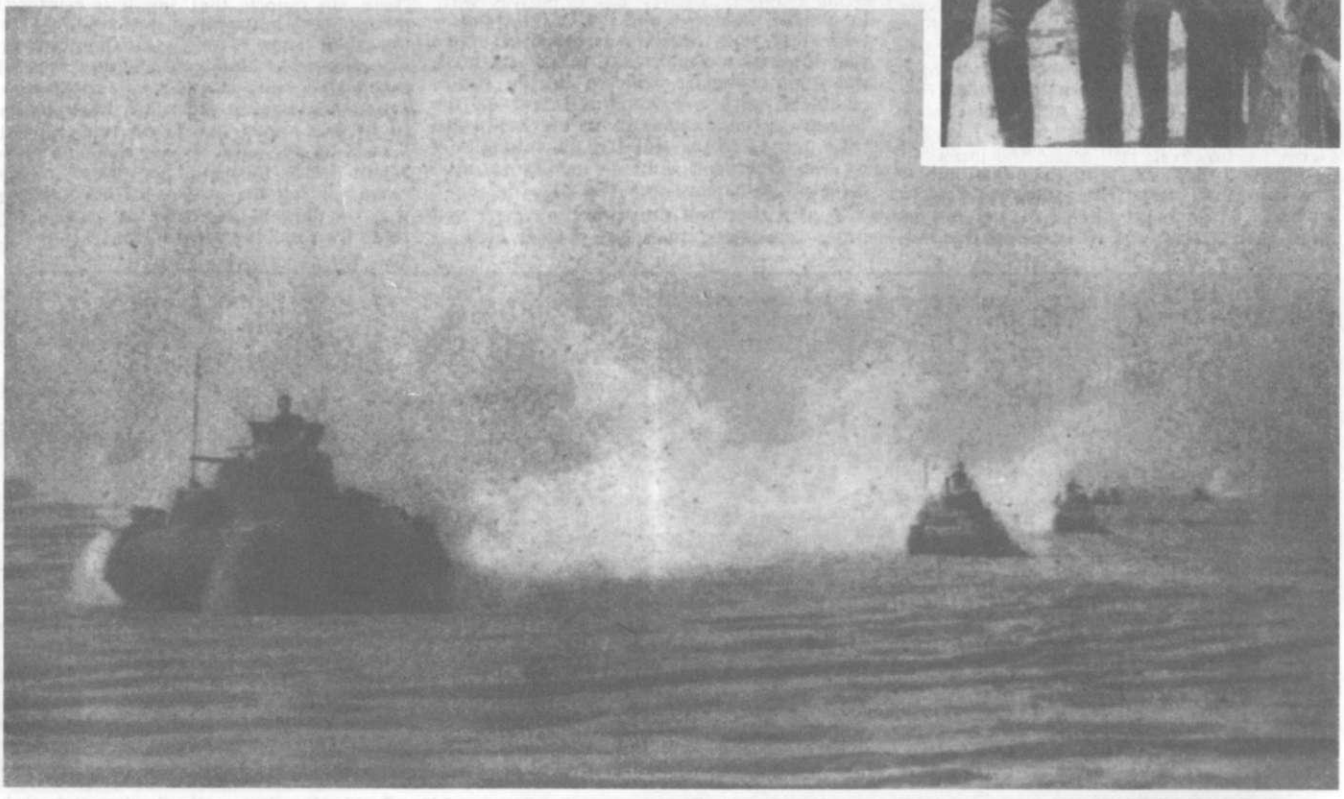
IN THE KHARKOV SECTOR fierce fighting continues between Timoshenko's Red Army and Von Bock's Hitlerites, as the Russians style their enemy. Here are two photographs radioed from the battle-front. That on the left shows two Red Army men waiting with deadly concentration the approach of the enemy; powerful "tank-bursting" machine-gun, grenades and Molotov cocktails are all ready to give the foe appropriate greeting. Then the second photograph is of a number of German soldiers holding their helmets and arms high in the air in token of surrender to the Red Army tank detachment occupying the foreground. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

Rommel's Tanks Speed Across the Desert



IN LIBYA, some of the Axis "armour" comes under heavy fire. Right, below, Field-Marshal Rommel—the General received his promotion on the morrow of his storming of the British stronghold of Tobruk—and the Italian General Bastico conferring before the battle.





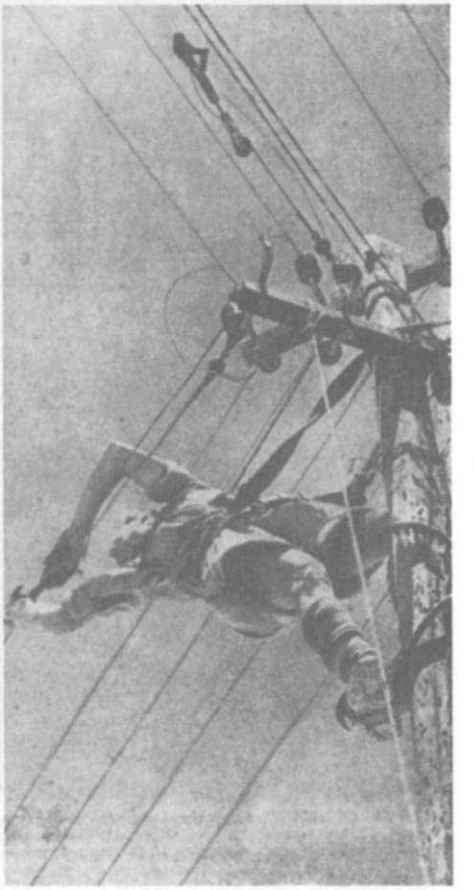
AXIS TANKS, spread out in battle formation over the undulating sand, give the appearance of battleships as they go into action. Above, German anti-tank gun waiting for the arrival of British tanks. The Afrika Korps is well equipped with anti-tank guns—5 and 4 centimetres and 88 mm. (3·46 in.). The last, originally an anti-aircraft weapon, fires a 20 lb. shell at the rate of 15 to 20 rounds a minute.

Photos, Keystone, Associated Press

Britons in Action in the Battle of Egypt

GEN. SIR C. AUCHINLECK, C.-in-C. in the Middle East, takes the salute from some of the 750,000 men under his command.

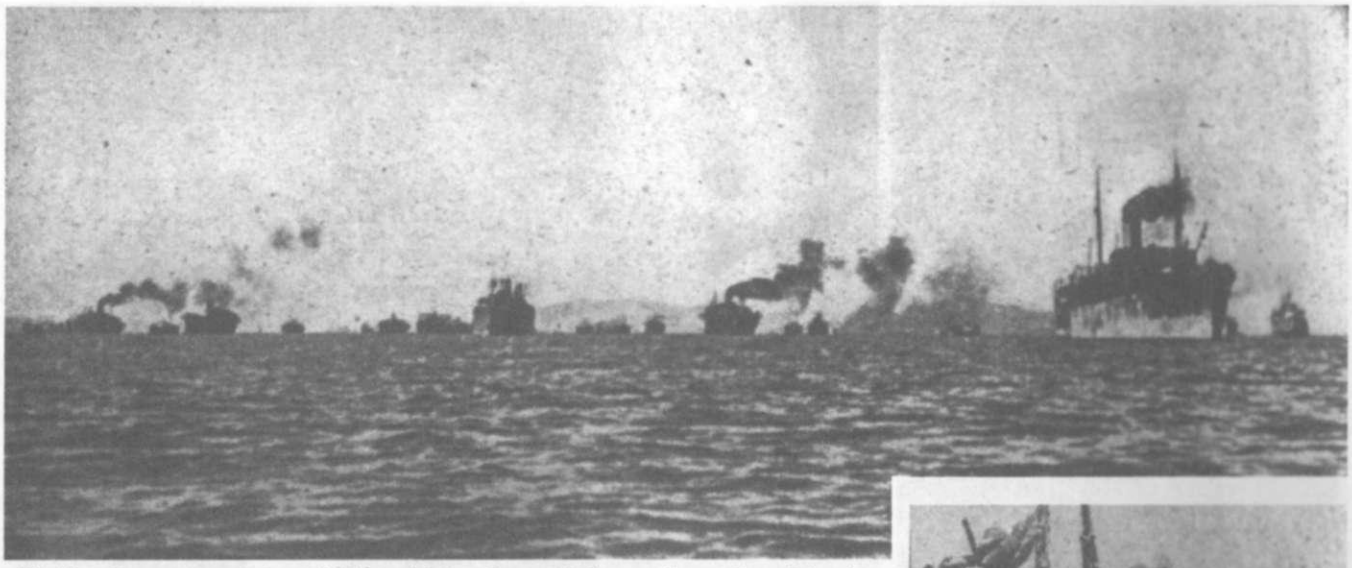
OUTSIDE MERSA MATRUH, British gunners, stripped to the waist, are seen in action under fire. Mersa Matruh was evacuated on June 29. The photo was radioed from the battle zone.



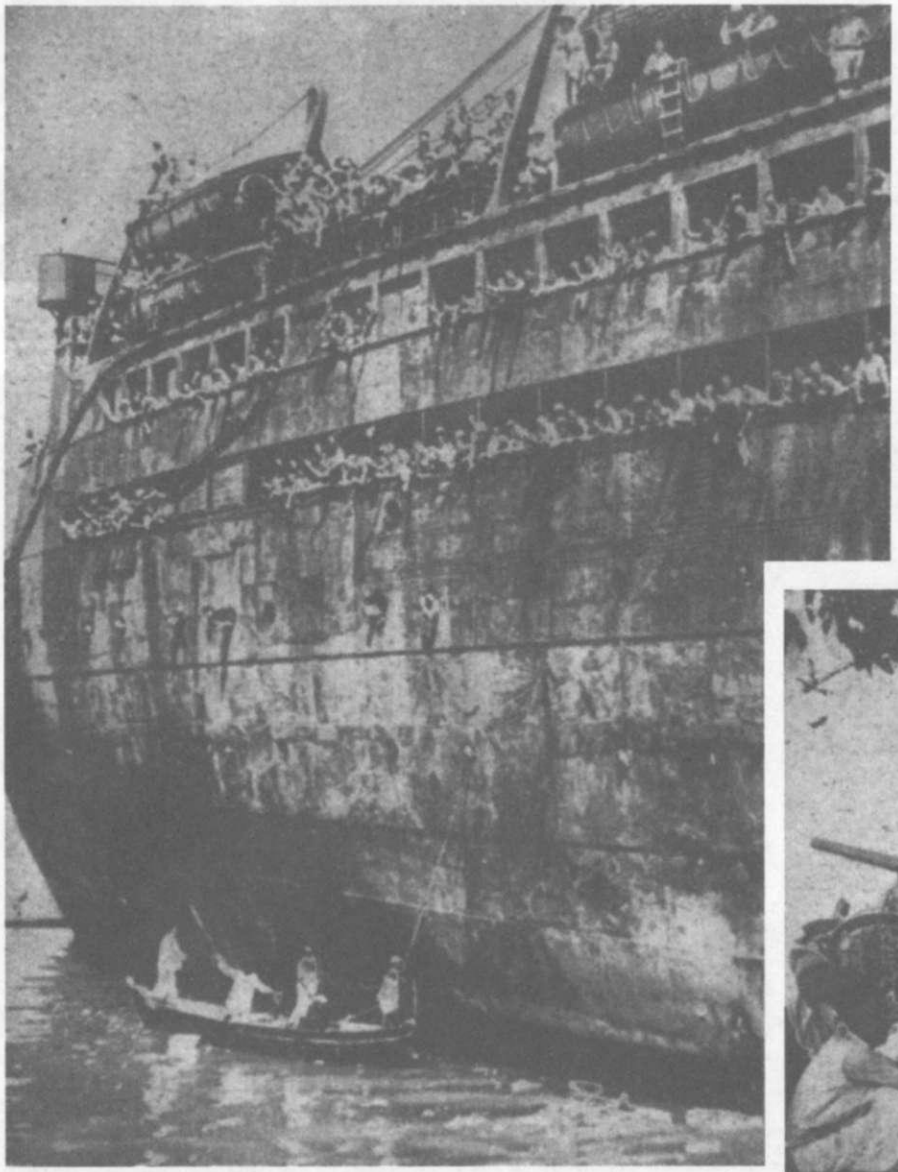
IN EGYPT, British infantry patrols on reconnaissance in the shade of a group of palm trees. Right, linesman of the Royal Corps of Signals repairing telephone and telegraph lines, broken by enemy fire or the stress of weather, in the Western Desert.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

Help for India! The Convoy Makes Port



The biggest convoy ever to leave Britain, consisting of some of the most famous liners belonging to the United Nations, arrives off India, laden with troops and equipment for the defence of the Empire—a wonderful effort in organization and courage.

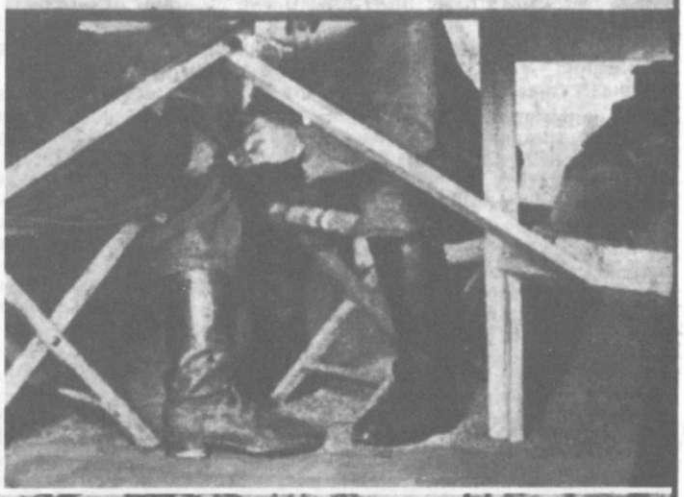


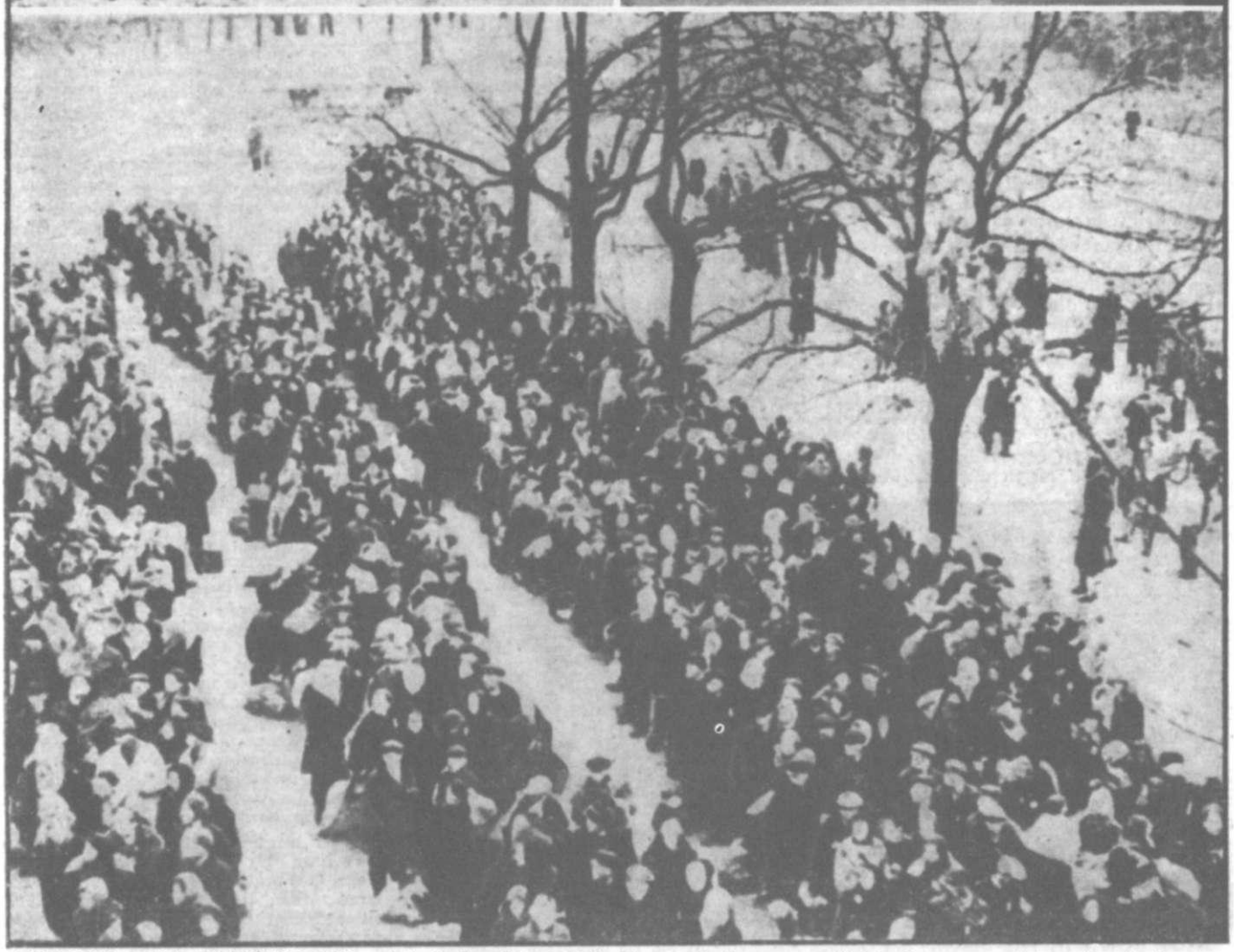
Coming down to solid earth after weeks on the rolling wave, a group of British soldiers avail themselves of a dockside crane.

INDIA AT LAST, after the long and perilous voyage. Troops lining the decks of one of the largest ships. Right, Indians taking an interest in one of the tanks which, with a great number of planes and guns, were disembarked at various ports.

Photos. G.P.U.

How the 'Herrenvolk' Treat the Poles





THE NEW ORDER OF DAMNATION, such is the literal truth of the Herrenvolk idea, now applied to German-occupied territory in Europe. You either become slaves to the execrable German race, are treated like cattle and lose your identity as human beings, or you protest and suffer torture or death or both. In the photograph above a crowd of men and women from Poland and Russia are about to be transported to Germany as forced labourers. At the top of the page, left, two Poles suspected of sabotage (one has obviously been struck in the face) are under escort; and right, a suspect is undergoing a brutal third degree.

Photos, Polish Ministry of Information, Associated Press

THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

DURING the period Saturday, June 20, to Friday, July 3, 1942, air power played an important part in the operations in Libya and the Crimea.

The trend of contemporary British thought was dominated by the defeat of the British Eighth Army in Libya, the fall of Tobruk on June 21 after a 26-hours' assault, and the subsequent retreat of the British Imperial Forces eastward from the Libya-Egypt frontier, past Mersa Matruh, to its stand 65 miles west of Alexandria for the beginning of the second great battle with Marshal Rommel's forces at El Alamein on July 2.

The importance of the outcome of this battle for Alexandria was enhanced by the evacuation of Sevastopol by the Russians on July 3 after a siege lasting nearly 8 months.

It is impossible at such close historical range to disentangle all the components which go to the making of victory or defeat in a particular battle, but just as the development of modern weapons has placed in the hands of generals the power of swift concentration of instruments of war with great destructive properties, so a general, to achieve success, must not only employ his own weapons with superlative precision of timing, but must deny the use of a proportion of equivalent weapons to the enemy.

These principles were applied by the Germans in the fifth battle of Libya and in the siege and capture of Sevastopol. In each case air power was used to obtain the desired object, but its application was in the one case indirect, and, in the other, direct.

The strategic setting of the two battles was similar. The contesting armies fought close to the seaboard. It was thus possible for all three arms of war to be engaged in active operations. The conditions were ideal for the employment of the speed, hitting power, and mobility of the air weapon.

The Russians and the United Nations each possessed surface sea superiority in the Black Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean respectively. At sea the smaller surface forces which opposed them were supported by submarines and air forces. In each case the superiority in surface sea power was unavailing against the combined pressure of all arms of the enemy. Both actions show that surface sea power does not possess the quality it formerly had of applying tremendous pressure upon an enemy and his lines of supply. As the range of guns has not altered appreciably during the past 25 years, the cause of the altered position of sea power must be ascribed to the development of air power.

This new situation in war was recognized by the United States within six months of her entry into the war, and the decision was taken during the period under review to build no more U.S. battleships at present, but to concentrate instead upon aircraft-carriers, aircraft, cruisers and smaller vessels (*See* p. 86).

Brigadier-General William Mitchell, Assistant Chief of the Army Air Service of the United States, was regraded to the substantive rank of Colonel in consequence of his too open advocacy of air power in the summer of 1925. Six months later he was out of the army for good, deprived of rank, after a court-martial which tried him following his issue of a public statement which upheld his views in strong terms. This year the United States Government restored his rank, and posthumously (he died in 1936) promoted him to the rank of General. The type of bomber which first bombed Tokyo is called the "Mitchell."

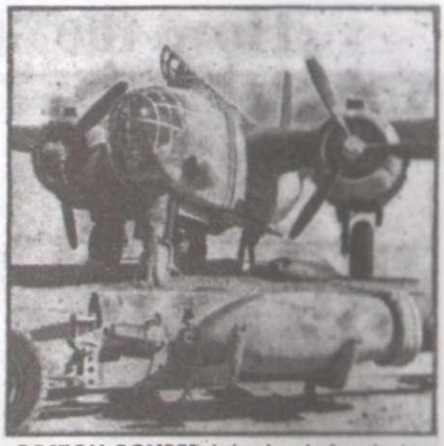
The United States had to learn the lessons of Pearl Harbour, Wake Island, the battles of the Coral Sea and Midway Island, the fall of Malaya and Burma to re-cast their decision on the battleship-building programme. Now they are determined to possess "a terrific concentration of air striking power over the oceans."

Air striking power over the water played a considerable part in the German successes in Libya and the Crimea.

IN my previous commentary (*see* p. 40) I described the battle of the British convoys in the Mediterranean and pointed out how, even in the middle of a major land battle, Rommel had no hesitation in disengaging air power from immediate tactical employment in the field to prevent our convoys from running their full supplies to Malta.

If our convoys got to Malta, Rommel's own convoys would be imperilled in their trans-Mediterranean journeys to his bases.

We had air superiority over the battlefield. But Rommel had air superiority over the Central Mediterranean zone—in Libya, Tripoli, Sicily, Italy, Greece and Crete. The result of the action showed that Rommel had air superiority in the strategic sense, while our superiority was tactical. The lesson for the future is that air supremacy—not simply local superiority—is the prime air power consideration in this war.



BOSTON BOMBER being bombed up by its South African ground crew prior to taking off for another raid. S.A.A.F. planes have valiantly supported the R.A.F. in Libya.

AIR supremacy includes the enjoyment of air bases. Rommel's victory at Gazala caused our Army to retreat, and with its retreat the R.A.F. lost its airfields. Tobruk was left without air cover. The German Stuka dive-bombers could operate unmolested. They drove the first breach in the defences of Tobruk.

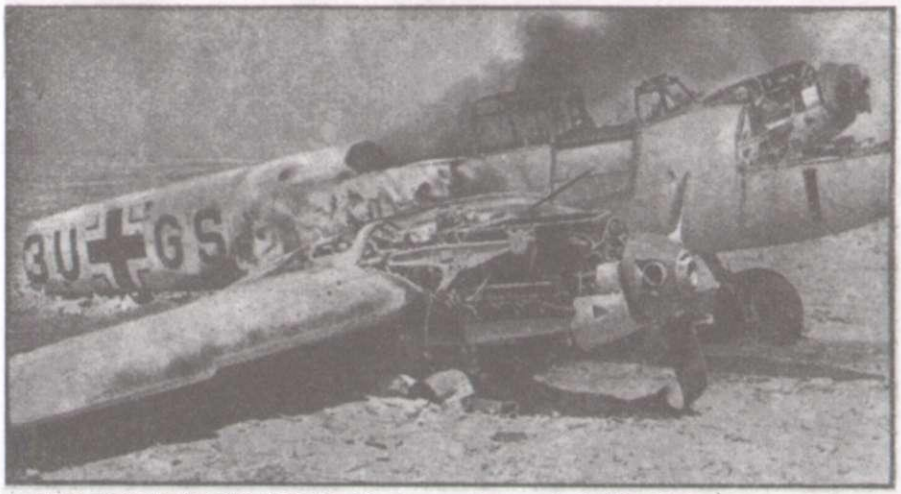
Air power and secure air bases are synonymous terms. Air power is at its best in offensive action. It is less effective during retreat. This has been proved time and again during the past 25 years. The one shining exception was the Battle of Britain, wherein the conditions were exceptional.

During the siege of Sevastopol the Russian sea communications were constantly imperilled by German air power. The Germans possessed better air bases for action against the fortress city than the defenders, who were, in the later stages; beleaguered. The Germans used their air power to pound the Russian communications and positions; in these circumstances the Russians put up a stout defence. Here the tale is the same story of the enemy's possession of superior strategic air bases.

There is a twofold lesson to be learned from these tragic defeats. It is that the strategic disposition of air power is even more important than its tactical employment. The second follows from the first, but the first does not follow from the second. Dispositions of all forces must therefore take into primary consideration the disposition of air forces. Norway, Greece, Crete, and now Libya all fell because tactical air defence was attempted without strategic air strength.

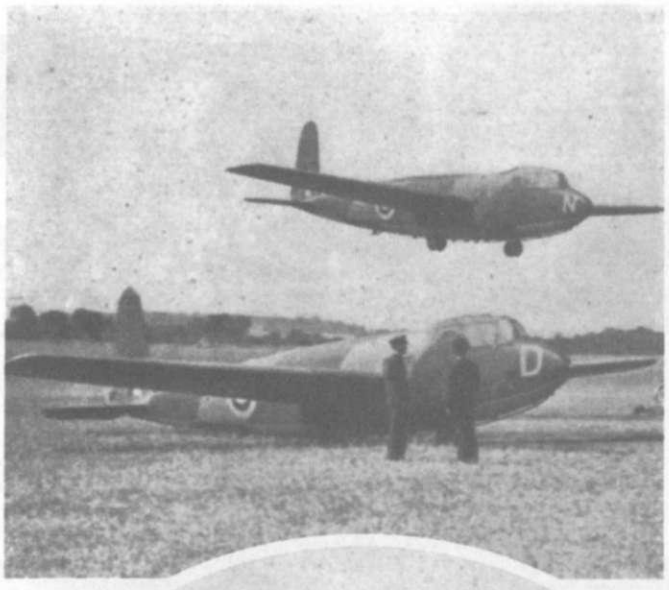
IN the air war against Germany, Emden and Bremen were the principal targets: Emden, a port for the intake of iron ore from the Baltic en route to the Ruhr; Bremen, producer-city of submarines and trans-ocean aircraft. Bremen was the target for our third 1,000-bomber raid, concentrated into one hour and a quarter on the night of June 25, followed by additional raids on the nights of June 27 and 29 and July 2.

If we take the war out of the realm of the localized battlefields, and regard it as a world war, it will be seen that these raids on German industry are in a still greater sense just what Rommel did in the Mediterranean. Indeed, it can be said (although we have not yet got all our strength together by any means) that our strategy is even more widely placed than Germany's. The official announcement that United States bomber squadrons will soon operate with ours from the United Kingdom in the war against Germany is further evidence of a world strategy which should mean that this is Hitler's last year of opportunity for victory.

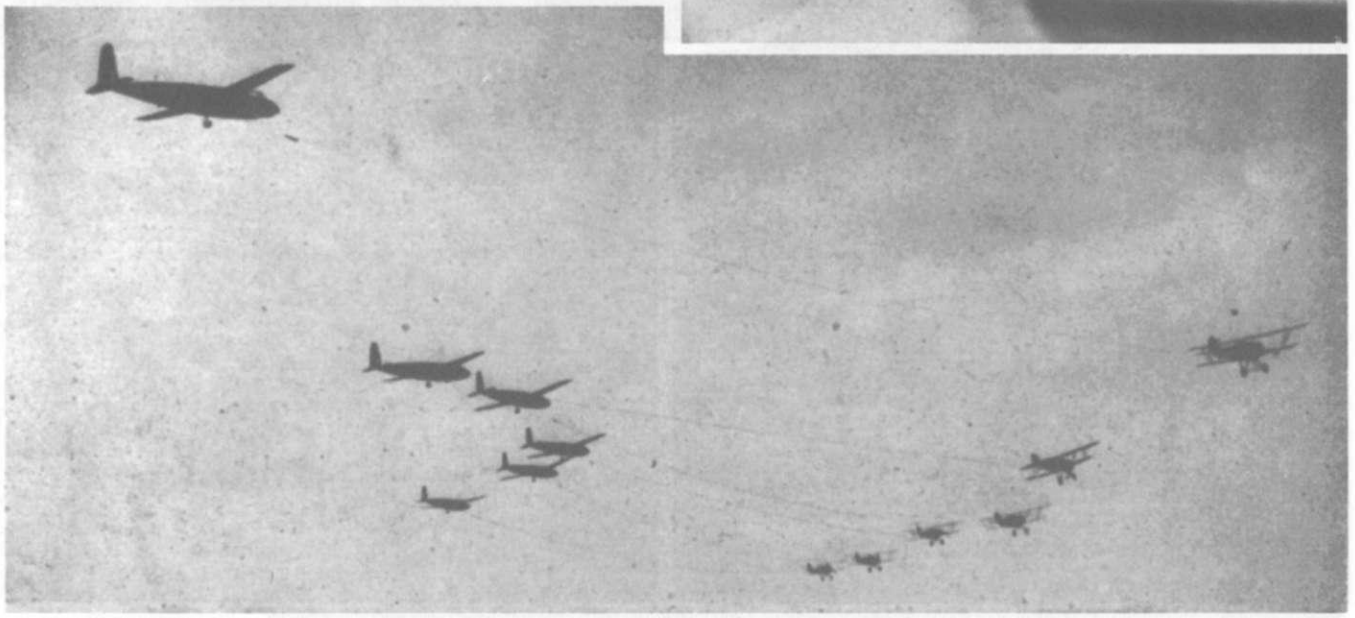


SHOT DOWN IN THE DESERT, this German Messerschmitt Me 110 long-range two-seater fighter is one of the Nazis' many casualties in their conflict with the air forces of Britain and South Africa. "Here at home," said Mr. Churchill in a telegram to Air Chief Marshal Tedder, "we are all watching with enthusiasm the brilliant, supreme exertions of the Royal Air Force in the battle now proceeding in Egypt." *Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright*

Today Britain Too Has Glider Troops



Oval, an R.A.F. instructor with an Army pupil in the cockpit of a glider. Top left, glider about to land gliding over another on the ground.



A FLIGHT OF GLIDERS flying in formation towed by training aircraft. Right, above, a glider seen from the towing aeroplane. The Glider Training School is now an essential part of army mechanization. Airborne troops take a course in glider flying under the supervision of R.A.F. pilots. It was in the Battle of Crete that gliders were first used on any large scale. For invasion tactics the glider has advantages in that troops can be dropped near their objective.

Photos, P.N.A., G.P.U.

Now the W.A.A.F. Is Three Years Old

Prior to large-scale bombing operations, the W.A.A.F.s are more than usually busy folding parachutes.

W.A.A.F. driver wishes "Good luck" to the bomber crew whom she has driven to the dispersal point.

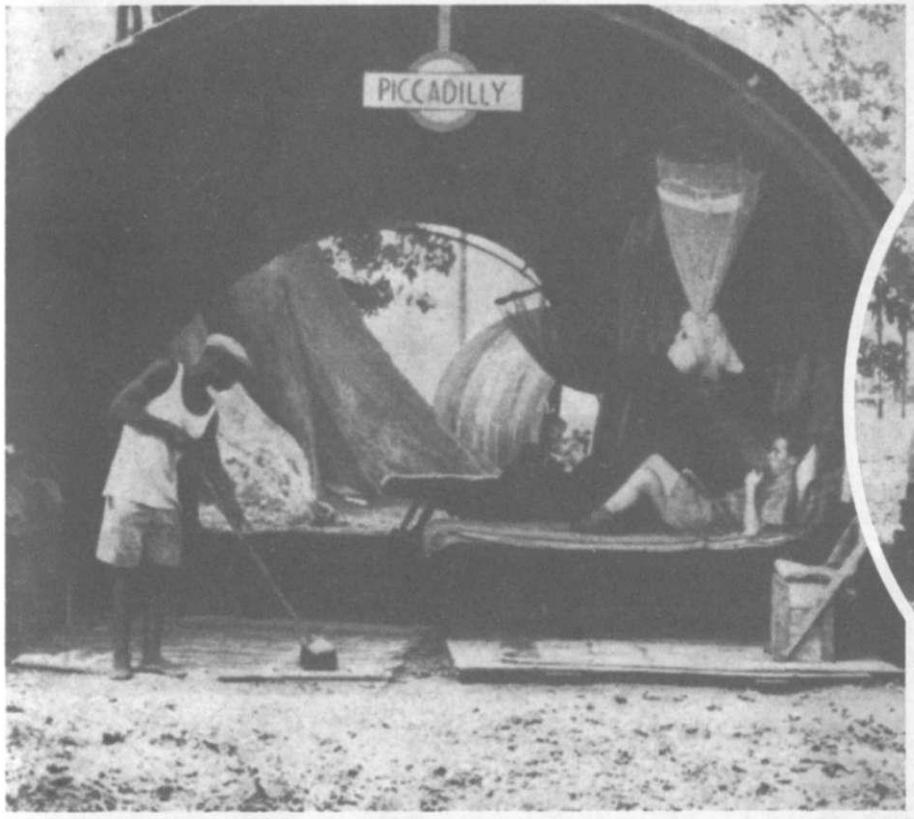
CUTTING THE CAKE on the occasion of the recent W.A.A.F. birthday celebrations is Air Commandant K. J. Trefusis Forbes, while the cooks look on. Right, members of the W.A.A.F. filling vacuum flasks and packing rations for bomber crews in readiness for night operations. In the circle, a W.A.A.F. radio-operator contacting R.A.F. crews during the third four-figure raid over enemy territory—to Bremen on June 25, 1942. These photographs were taken on the W.A.A.F.'s third birthday.

Photos, British Official; L.N.A., G.P.U.

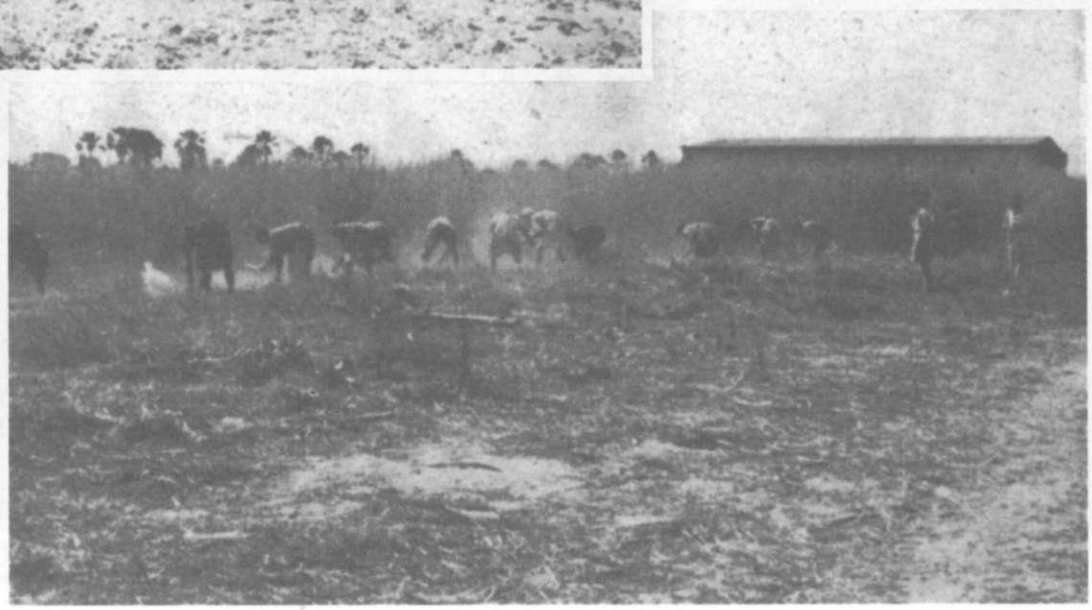
In West Africa the R.A.F. Build an Aerodrome

Hurricane fighter being wheeled on to an aerodrome somewhere in West Africa. Only a short time ago this site was indistinguishable from the tropical jungle which still encompasses it on every side.

Beneath, West African headquarters of a Royal Air Force flying boat squadron, and flying boat and marine craft base. The hut has been called Piccadilly as a reminder of London town. Under the mosquito net, which has been tied up, an officer is enjoying a book and a pipe of tobacco in between spells of duty.



WEST AFRICANS clearing the bush to extend the aerodrome, under supervision of the adjutant (right). Oval, a ground crew sheltering from the tropical heat under the wing of a bomber.



Here, at this West African outpost, men of the R.A.F., working with reconnaissance bombers, flying boats and fighter squadrons, are doing an important job. The heat is terrific and comforts are few, but these remote defenders of freedom manage to keep cheerful and healthy.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

America's Naval Base in Northern Ireland

U.S. NAVY police squad leaving their ship at the great new American Naval base at Londonderry, in Northern Ireland. Below, U.S. Marines changing guard.

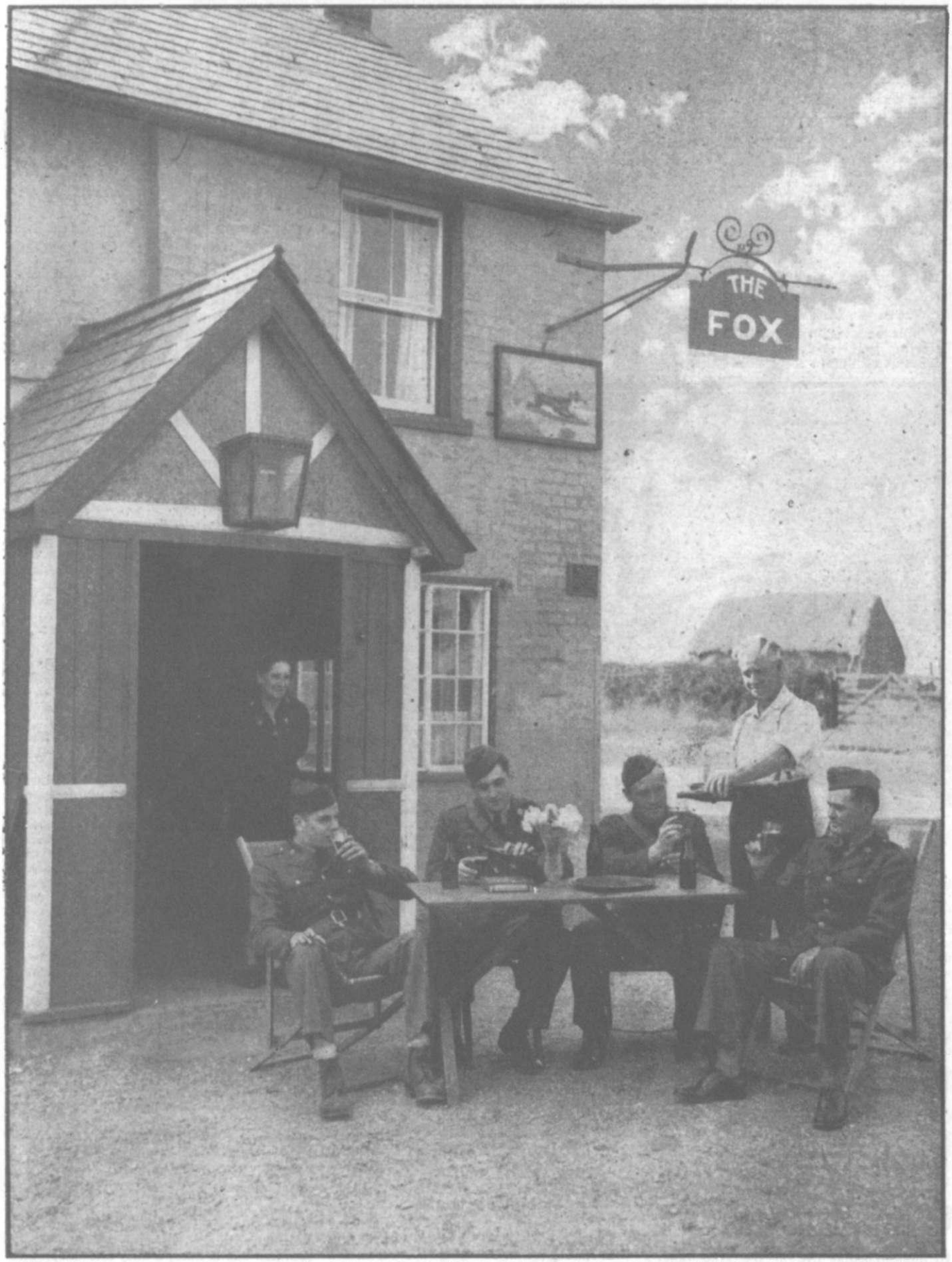
The Londonderry base was built by 800 American technicians, members of the Naval Civil Engineering Corps mostly, assisted by about 2,000 local workers. The contract was signed on June 12, 1941 ; the first shipload of material arrived from across the Atlantic on July 8, work began on August 1, and on February 5 this year the base was officially declared in commission.

Capt. W. J. LARSON, Commandant of the base ; he is a veteran of the U.S. Queenstown base in the last war. Beneath, U.S. sailors scrubbing hammock covers on the quay.

Back to their ship after shore leave. American bluejackets stationed at Londonderry have won widespread popularity in Ulster.

Photos, Fox, Planet News

Here's Luck to the U.S. Forces in England



OVER HERE, a quartette of the advanced units of the vast force which the United States is sending to Britain in readiness to take part in the European theatre of war, enjoy a glass of English ale at the sign of the Fox, a typical English inn somewhere in the country. Mine host and hostess are glad to welcome, as we all are, these men from the great American Republic. *Photo, P.N.A.*

Egypt: Between the Desert and the 'Ditch'

Only a day or two after the storming of Tobruk, Rommel swept across the frontier into Egypt with a view to securing those supreme prizes, Alexandria on the Nile delta, and the Suez Canal. In this article we present some facts neeessary for an understanding of the new battle-zone.

THE land of Egypt! For thousands of years it has been the battleground of empires, the scene of conflicts which have decided the fate of the world for many a hundred years. Conqueror after conqueror has stood on the banks of the Nile and in the shadow of the pyramids—colossal erections, yet not so colossal as the pride of the Pharaohs which caused them to be built out of the rock, cemented by human sweat and tears and blood. Alexander and Caesar, Saladin and Napoleon—they have come, had their little day, and have gone. Time after time, through age after age,

While the dark shades of forty ages stood
Like startled giants by Nile's famous flood;
Or from the pyramid's tall pinnacle
Beheld the desert peopled, as from hell,
With clashing hosts, who strew'd the barren sand.

Now once again Egypt is the cockpit of warring armies. Once more, as Rommel's armoured columns forge ahead through the billowing clouds of dust to meet Auchinleck's "battle groups," the desert is peopled with "clashing hosts as from hell." But the conflict of today is of a size and character that would have staggered even Byron's genius to describe. He wrote of an Age of Bronze: we live in an age of steel and oil.

What sort of a place is this land of Egypt? It is a country born of a river and sustained by a river; and without that river it would soon fail to be distinguished from the sterile desert which bounds it on east and west.

BUT that region—the Nile valley, that is, with the Delta behind Alexandria where the great river broadens out and forms many a branch to meet the Mediterranean—is but a fraction of what the geographers call Egypt, is only some 13,000 square miles out of a total area of 383,000 square miles. Yet it comprises practically all the settled area. For the rest Egypt is a collection of deserts—the Libyan (dotted here and there at vast intervals with oases), the Arabian, and Sinai.

As might be expected, most of Egypt's 16 million people live in the Nile valley; only a few thousand Arabs make their homes in the oases and in the dreary and desolate region which lies on either side of the Nile's green ribbon. Of those 16 millions Cairo, the capital, claims nearly a million and a half; the great port of Alexandria has a population of about 700,000, and Port Said about 125,000. Another three-quarters of a million or so have their homes in more or less urban areas, but for the rest the people are country-dwellers or *fellahin*, who are engaged as their fathers have been engaged since before history began in cultivating the intricate patchwork of fields carved out of the mud deposited by the Nile. As often as not, their agricultural methods are so primitive as to recall those pictured on the walls of the ancient tombs, but the fellah of today enjoys one advantage denied his ancestors in the shape of the magnificent system of artificial irrigation which British administrators and engineers have given to Egypt. British Imperialism could wish for no better monument than the great dam at Aswan, which bottles up and conserves the flow of water born of the snows in the Abyssinian highlands, so that the superabundance of one season may compensate for the lack of the next. Wheat, barley and maize, rice and sugar cane, beans and onions are among the principal crops; and the production of cotton has assumed increasing importance.

ALEXANDRIA—CAIRO—SUEZ. Although Egypt is some six hundred miles long, measuring from the Mediterranean to the Sudan border, and covers an area of 383,000 square miles—more than six times the size of England and Wales—all that matters is the Nile Valley, the Delta and the adjacent Suez Canal zone. This map, indeed, covers the most thickly populated and politically and commercially important regions. *Specially drawn for* THE WAR ILLUSTRATED *by Félix Gardon*

Old as Egypt is, it is one of the most juvenile of modern states. From the day when Cleopatra killed herself to avoid shameful exposure in Caesar's triumph to only recently, Egypt formed part of the succession of empires which have ruled along the Mediterranean fringe. The British went there in 1882, although Egypt was nominally included in the realms of the Sultan of Turkey until 1914, when, following Turkey's entry into the war against us, a British protectorate over the country was proclaimed, the pro-Turk khedive was deposed, and an Egyptian prince given the title of Sultan of Egypt. The protectorate came to an end in 1922, whereupon the Sultan was proclaimed king; the present sovereign is his son, King Faruk I, a young man of twenty-two. But although Egypt has her independence, Britain occupies a privileged position in the country, since the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Alliance, signed in 1936, provides for the use of Egyptian communications by Britain in time of war, and also recognizes her special interests in the defence of the Suez Canal zone. This zone runs from Port Said to Suez, a distance of about a hundred miles. It is only two hundred yards wide, yet within it contains a full-gauge railway, a first-class high road, one of the most important and most used of the world's electric cables, sweet water conduits—and the Canal.

OPENED in 1869, the Suez Canal is the property of a French company, the *Compagnie Universelle du Canal Maritime de Suez*, which has its head office in Paris at 1, Rue d'Astorg. In normal times it is controlled by a board of management consisting of thirty-two administrators—nineteen French, ten British (three appointed by the Government and seven by the shipowning interests), two Egyptian, and one Dutch. The majority of the shares are in French hands, but the British Government owns the largest single block of shares—295,000 out of 652,000. Its holding was originally acquired in 1875, when Disraeli made a spectacular deal with a spendthrift Khedive; the purchase price was £4 million, and it has been stated that more than £40 millions has been received in interest, while just before the war the shares were included in our national balance-sheet at £32 millions.

Britain is not only the largest individual shareholder in the Canal, but British vessels are the most numerous of those making use of it. Thus of the 5,277 ships which went through the Canal in 1929, 2,627 were British; next in order came Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Norway and Greece, and so on down to China's one.

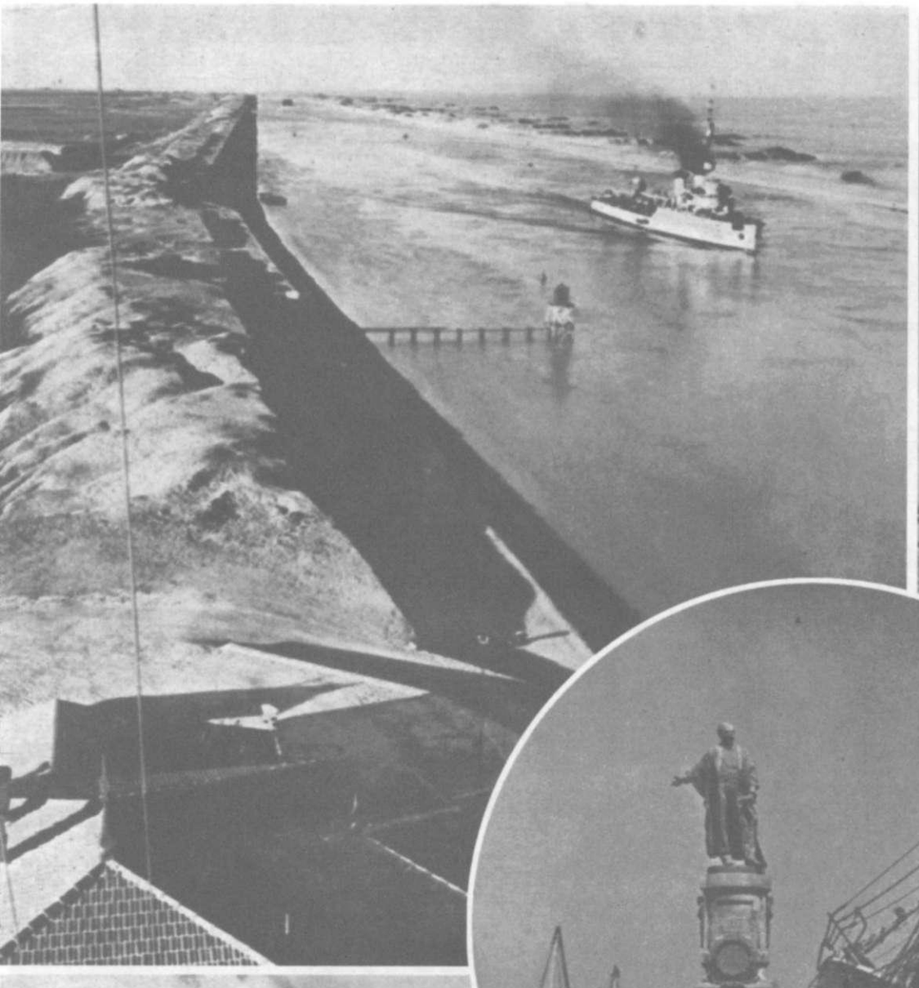
But though the Company is an international concern, though its management is predominantly French, in this present time of war the Canal is under the complete control of the British Empire. The zone from end to end is one great military camp, just as it was in the last war, when it was threatened from the east front—not as today from the west; there was one day in February 1915 when the Turks actually reached the further bank of the Canal. Theoretically the Canal, in accordance with the terms of its charter, is open to the ships of all nations in wartime as in time of peace; theoretically there is nothing to prevent German ships, Italian and Japanese ships from making the passage—nothing save the existence at either end of British naval forces. The banks are controlled by the Egyptian Camel Corps; anti-aircraft guns are spaced throughout the Canal's length, and at entrance and exit a great boom is let down each night to prevent the passage of submarines. A close watch is kept for mines, and every ship making the passage is rigorously searched. From the air the Canal is not particularly vulnerable since it has no locks to be put out of action; the chief dangers to be guarded against are sabotage, air-sown mines, and a vessel sunk by design or accident across the fairway.

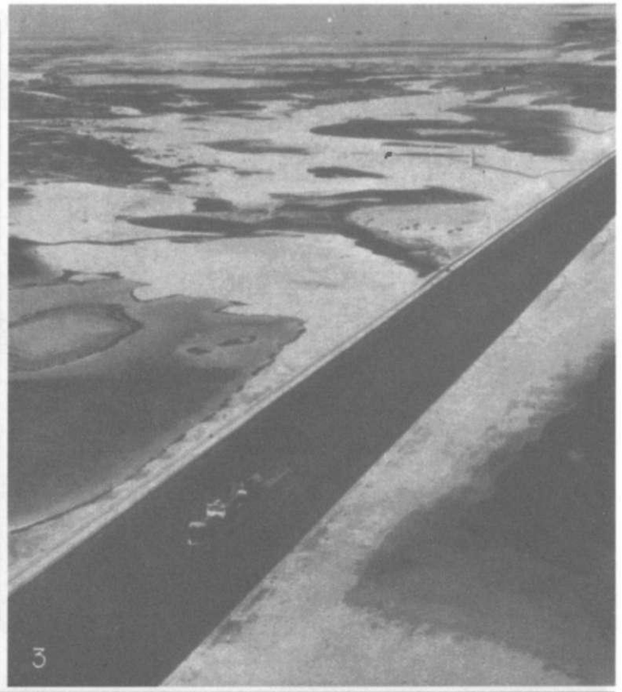
Port Said, at the northern end of the Canal, has (as was said above) a population of 125,000; facing it across the Canal is Port Fuad, where are the headquarters of the Canal administration. Near the middle of the Canal is Ismailia, standing on the fine road which runs beside the "ditch" from end to end; here are situated the headquarters of the Canal Brigade of the British Army, the Naval authorities, and the Egyptian Military Governor. Then at the southern end is Suez, a dirty and dilapidated Arab town of some 50,000 population, connected by a causeway with the Egyptian garden city of Port Tewfik. E. ROYSTON PIKE

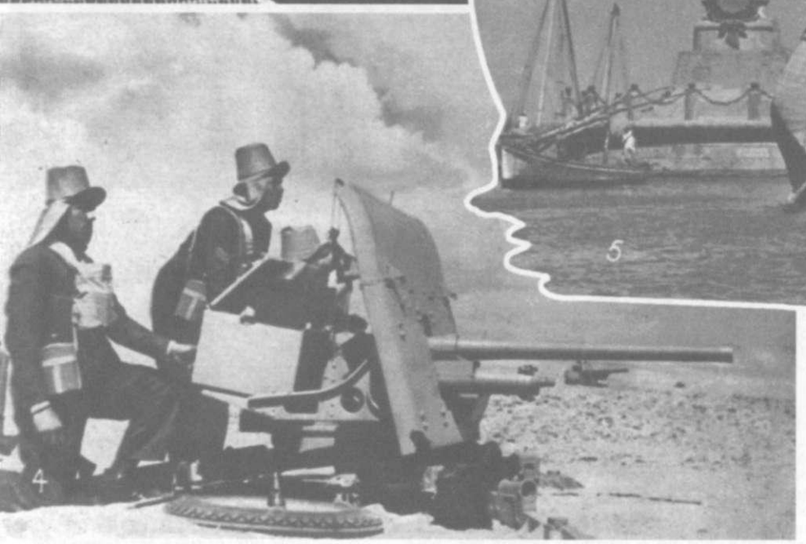
Photos, P.N.A., Keystone

War Comes to the Land of Egypt

With the fall of Tobruk and Mersa Matruh, Rommel's way lay open for the battle of Egypt. So once again the Pyramids, ancient when Europe was peopled by barbaric tribes, look out on mortal strife as R.A.F. bombers pass to and fro with their loads of death. In the larger photograph Egyptian sentries are patrolling the frontier between Egypt and Libya.



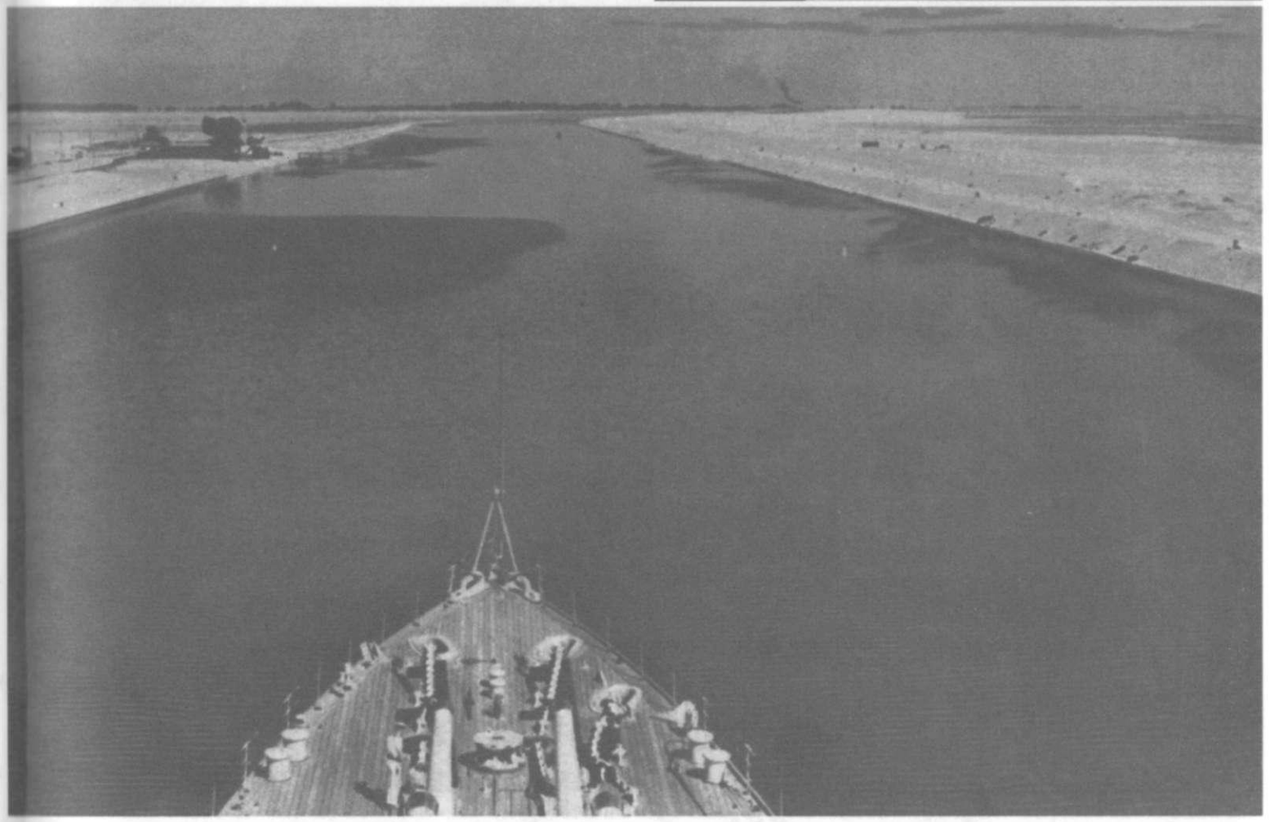




Britain's Life-Line of Empire

1. From Port Said to Suez runs for a hundred miles the Suez Canal; this is a typical stretch. 2. Egyptian gunners, part of the Canal's defences. 3. An aerial view of the Canal, which runs dead straight from Port Said as far as Ismailia at the entrance to the Bitter Lakes. The minimum width is 196 ft. 10 in. and the maximum draught allowed for ships is 34 ft.

Photos, Mrs. T. [illegible] Popper, [illegible]



[illegible] Fox, Paul Keech Star

Wartime Glimpses of the Suez Canal

The Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Alliance of 1936 provided for the defence of the Canal by joint British and Egyptian forces; in (4) is seen an Egyptian anti-tank gun in the desert beside the "ditch." 5. At Port Said is this statue of Ferdinand de Lesseps, the French diplomatist and engineer who built the Canal. 6. Another view of the Canal.

These Names Spell the Egypt of Today

With the invasion of Egypt, Cairo (seat of British G.H.Q.) assumed an ever more martial aspect; this photo shows an Egyptian Bren-gun post at a bridge approach. Alexandria, Britain's great naval base in the Eastern Mediterranean, is the subject of the upper photograph. "Alex" is also Egypt's chief commercial port.

Do We Yet Know Why We Lost Tobruk?

While the news of the Tobruk disaster was still fresh in men's minds the House of Commons debated a motion of censure on Mr. Churchill's Government. On the second day the motion was rejected by 475 votes to 25; but the result did not dispel the disquiet with which the course of the campaign in the Western Desert was watched.

WHY did Tobruk fall? Why, seven months after Mr. Churchill declared that in Libya "this is the first time we have met the Germans at least equally well armed and equipped," and six months after he told the House of Commons that General Auchinleck had set out to destroy the entire armed forces of the Germans and Italians in Cyrenaica, "and I am bound to say that it seems probable that he will do so," —why after these hopeful expressions should there so soon come a time when the Imperial Forces in the Western Desert were in full retreat and Egypt and the Suez Canal were definitely threatened by Rommel's swift-moving panzers? These were some of the questions put by M.P.s in the debate which took place in the first two days of July. They were answered, but only in part.

None seems to have been more surprised than Mr. Churchill at the swift reversal of fortune in the Libyan battle. The fall of Tobruk, with its garrison of about 25,000 men, in a single day, was utterly unexpected—unexpected not only by the House and the public at large but by the War Cabinet, the Chiefs of the Staff, by General Auchinleck and the High Command in the Middle East.

"On the night before its capture we received a telegram from General Auchinleck that he had allotted what he believed to be an adequate garrison, that the defences were in good order, and that 90 days' supplies were available for the troops."

Mr. Churchill heard the news in Washington, where he had arrived on June 18 to consult with President Roosevelt on the prosecution of the war.

"When on the morning of Sunday the 21st I went into the President's room, I was greatly shocked to be confronted with a report that Tobruk had fallen. I found it difficult to believe, but a few minutes later my own telegram, forwarded from London, arrived. I hope the House will realize what a bitter pang this was to me. . . ."

A few moments later Mr. Churchill revealed that the opposing armies drawn up in the desert in the middle of May numbered about 100,000 a side: more exactly, Ritchie had 100,000 men and Rommel 90,000, of whom 50,000 were Germans. We had a superiority in the numbers of tanks (though not, it transpired, in quality) of perhaps 7 to 5. We had a superiority in artillery of nearly 8 to 5. Throughout the battle our army enjoyed superiority in the air. Lastly, we had better and shorter lines of communication than the enemy.

Even after the fall of Bir Hacheim on June 10 the battle was equal, but on June 13 there came a change.

"On that morning we had about 300 tanks in action, and by nightfall no more than 70 remained, excluding the light Stuart tanks; and all this happened without any corresponding loss having been inflicted on the enemy . . . with this disproportionate destruction of our armour Rommel became decisively the stronger."

After a reference to the "many evil consequences that followed inevitably on this one day's fighting," Mr. Churchill made it clear that the army in Libya had been overpowered and driven back not because of any conscious or wilful grudging of reinforcements in men or material. During the last two years, he announced, more than 950,000 men had been sent to the Middle East theatre of war, together with 4,500 tanks, 6,000 aireraft, nearly 5,000 pieces of artillery, 50,000 machine-guns and over 100,000 mechanical vehicles. And this at a time when we were not only threatened with invasion at home but, during the latter part, were sending large supplies to Russia.

Mr. Churchill spoke at the end of the debate. The other Government spokesman, Mr. Lyttelton, spoke almost at the beginning, in reply to the proposers of the censure motion, Sir John Wardlaw-Milne and Sir Roger Keyes. The critics alleged that so far from answering the indictment he made a speech for the prosecution.

Dismal indeed was the picture drawn by the Minister of Production. A tank engaged in the Libyan fighting was the Crusader. "And what a tank!" some of his hearers must have murmured as Mr. Lyttelton went on to say that it was unreliable and unsuitable for desert conditions. There was something incorrigibly wrong with the fan-driving assembly, so that the cooling system broke down. The traverse of the gun was interfered with if the lid of the secondary turret was up, and the driver's vision was

GUEST OF HONOUR. *From a cartoon by ZEC; Courtesy of The Daily Mirror*

too limited. Moreover—well-nigh incredible this—"the turret was too small for the man of ordinary physique." For the rest, Mr. Lyttelton could promise that new and better tanks and guns were under production and would be delivered in due course; while, as for dive-bombers, the orders were placed by Lord Beaverbrook in June 1940 and deliveries were now being received. "Some dive-bombers have already reached one theatre of war and others are on their way."

Almost without exception every speaker in the debate was critical to a greater or lesser degree. The newspapers throughout the country were even more condemnatory, whether in their "leaders" or in the reports they published from their correspondents at the front. The Daily Telegraph published a striking article, "By a Correspondent recently returned from Libya." According to this writer, there was no disposition to take the initiative. The whole idea was to wait for Rommel and see what he did. "Let Rommel and his Afrika Korps do all the hard work in the summer months under the blazing sun, in blinding dust storms"—this, he said, reflected the attitude of those Staff Officers with whom he conversed when he suggested that Rommel might not wait until the cool of the autumn. There were almost two armies in the Middle East, he went on, the Army of the Desert and the army in Cairo; and he quoted the favourite wise-crack: "If Rommel gets to the Pyramids and G.H.Q. turns out in its own defence, for the first time in his career Rommel will be outnumbered." Rommel was able to act more swiftly because he was unorthodox: he even sent out his orders "in clear," thus avoiding waste of time in de-coding.

Writing in the same issue, Christopher Buckley, The Daily Telegraph's Special Correspondent with the 8th Army, roundly declared that "some part of our defeat must be attributed to the tendency still existing to place officers in important commands over armoured units, whose chief qualification has been cavalry experience."

This point was elaborated by Major Oliver Stewart in The Evening Standard. "This is," he said, "a war of motoring; motoring by land and sea and air. It is not blood and tears we want, but grease and oil. Field-Marshal Rommel is a great motorist. Opposing him are great fox-hunters, or great traditional soldiers—men of sterling courage, ready at a moment's notice to have their heads blown off, longing for the tremendous clash of battle between equally matched forces, but not ingenious, not mechanics, not engineers. . . ."

And here, to conclude, is a passage from the speech made on the second day of the debate by Mr. Aneurin Bevan. "This is a proud and brave race," he said, "and it is feeling humiliated. It cannot stand the holding out of Sevastopol for months and the collapse of Tobruk in 26 hours . . . . It wants leadership. It is getting words . . . This nation can win, but it must be properly led, it must be properly inspired, and it must have confidence in its military leadership. Give us that and we can win the War . . ."

Sevastopol's Epic of Imperishable Glory

During the Crimean War, not quite ninety years ago, Sevastopol made history when for a year it withstood the assault of the combined armies of Britain, France and Turkey. Now a second siege of Sevastopol has ended. But Sevastopol's name and fame will live as an inspiration for generations to come.

"SEVASTOPOL has fallen." From Hitler's headquarters came the news in a special announcement on the evening of July 1.

"The German and Rumanian war flags have been hoisted on the fortress, town and harbour," went on the announcement. "German and Rumanian troops, commanded by Col.-Gen. von Mannstein, effectively supported by the air corps commanded by Col.-Gen. von Richthofen, mastered at noon today the strongest land and sea fortress in the world after 25 days' bitter fighting. Strong forts, fortifications built into rock and underground positions, concrete and earth bunkers, and innumerable field entrenchments were taken in exemplary collaboration between the two armies. The number of prisoners and amount of booty cannot yet be estimated. The remnants of the beaten Sevastopol army fled to the Khersonese Peninsula. They are being pressed together into a small area, and face destruction."

More details of the Russians' "last desperate defence" were contained in a statement issued by the German High Command.

"Dive-bombers opened the way for infantry through the positions in and around Nikolayevska. Heavy bombs, dropped from a low altitude, tore terrific blocks from the rock walls, which buried large parts of the Russian trenches. A similar effect was obtained by bombing the entrances to rock tunnels, thus silencing enemy batteries which were too well concealed for the German artillery. The destruction caused in the inner town of Sevastopol by previous German attacks was increased during yesterday. Barracks, railway depots and electricity and gas works went up in flames. Ships at anchor in the harbour were hit during the raid and several of them were sunk."

Sevastopol's siege began in November 1941, when von Mannstein's troops overran the Crimean peninsula, as far as the outer defences of the great Russian fortress-port. An attempt at that time to carry the place by storm cost the Germans sixteen thousand dead. During December a second attack was launched, and in the course of the seventeen days it lasted the German killed were reported to number 45,000. Followed a five months' lull—or rather near lull, since air raids were frequent. Then on June 5 the third attack was launched, and it was soon apparent that this time it was to be pressed to the bitter end. When it began, the Soviet C.-in-C., Admiral Umashev, told his troops: "If Sevastopol must fall it must cost the Germans 100,000 men. If you make the enemy pay this price, your sacrifice will not have been in vain." The defenders saw that the Germans did indeed pay the price, since even before the final assault the third attack had cost the lives of 50,000 German and Rumanian soldiers.

When the attack was in its second week Lt.-Gen. Dietmar, the Nazi military commentator, admitted, in a broadcast from Berlin, that the attempt to reduce Sevastopol was certainly no easy one. The approaches to the fortress, he pointed out, were ideal for the defence in every particular, since they consisted of many deep ravines and steep-sided gorges, which made direct shelling practically impossible. Everywhere there was excellent cover for the defenders, who had constructed positions deep in the rock, immune to even the most powerful guns or mines. Numerous natural caves provided roomy shelter for men and materials. Then coastal batteries and armoured and concrete defence positions made the Soviet defence particularly strong. Nor did the guns point only out to sea, as at Singapore . . . In the fighting, tanks were condemned to play a minor part or no part at all. Thus it was that even more than usual the brunt of the fighting fell upon the infantry.

Long before the end the inevitability of Sevastopol's fall was realized by soldiers and citizens alike. Yet there was no sign of weakening. Air raids were so frequent that the warning was no longer given, but the 60,000 people who remained in the city out of the original 130,000 or so still "carried on." In large measure they lived their lives underground, where in caves and in artificial galleries they had established factories and canteens, newspaper offices, dormitories and first-aid posts—even schools, until 15,000 children were evacuated with their mothers by warships of the Black Sea Fleet. Even the theatre continued in operation, and Moscow's Grand Guignol company played to crowded houses.

RUSSIA'S CRIMEAN STRONGHOLD: A plan of Sevastopol's fortifications, given in the Nazi paper, Voelkischer Beobachter. Individual forts, 1 to 5, were named by the Russians: Maxim Gorki, Molotov, Siberia, Stalin and Lenin. Sevastopol fell to the enemy on July 1. *Courtesy of the Daily Herald*

Ere long most of the city had been converted into rubble by shelling and bombing.

"Sevastopol does not stand any more," said the Soviet writer, Petrov, in a telephone message to Moscow. "There is no town left, no more acacia trees or chestnuts; no more clean, shady streets and little parks. Now each day is like a year. The fire upon us is heavier than ever before in the history of the war. Every yard of the yellow, rocky ground of the city is pocked with shell and bomb. Every day the enemy infantry attacks, believing nothing can be left after such a hell; and every day the yellow rocks of Sevastopol come to life again—come to life again with a deadly fire from her defenders."

Another description of life in the doomed city came from the Russian playwright Boris Voytechov, who reached Sevastopol after the third offensive had begun. The Germans, he reported, were trying to break the people's nerve with terror-bombing. Apart from screaming bombs they had rained down on the city pieces of railway lines, wheels, and ploughs. But the nerves of Sevastopol were different from those of Cologne or the Ruhr. The ordeal was being borne with stoical courage; the anonymous heroes of Sevastopol carried on. The electric power plant and telephones were still working. Unexploded land-mines were promptly cleared from the streets. Everybody was carrying a rifle or hand-grenades, and every enterprise had organized its defence groups so that the city bristled like a hedgehog. At one point on the front fighting was in progress in vineyards and orchards less than six miles from the city. Yet the nerves of those fighting on its shores were as calm as the Black Sea. "The scent from acacia drowns the stench of charred timbers, and by the light of star-shells and rockets the familiar façade of the city looks unchanged."

Fort after fort in the defence range was carried by assault—Fort Stalin, Fort Molotov, Fort Lenin, Fort Maxim Gorki. The last, said a German correspondent in a broadcast from Berlin, was a formidable fortress.

"Fort Maxim Gorki (he said) went on fighting even after it had been captured. It sounds unbelievable, but it is true. Although the upper storeys of this fort are in our hands and the battle line has moved some 1,400 yards forward, Soviet soldiers are beneath us, deep underground in the lower storeys of the fort, and continue to put up resistance. We have sent negotiators to explain to them that further resistance is useless, but they refuse to listen; they will not come out. While we succeeded in forcing several hundred Soviet soldiers out of the upper storeys, blasting them out with hand-grenades and explosives hurled through the apertures, we cannot reach these last men.

"Never before," he continued, "have we seen such armour-plate, such concrete walls, and, above all, such a kind of concrete, which is quite new to us. Fort Maxim Gorki had 13-in. guns, which continued to blast away even after our shock units and storming guns had been brought up to close range. They went on firing at a range of less than 800 yards, and even 500 yards. We have still to deal with other forts. One, a very large artillery bastion, has been by-passed by our troops, but continues to hold out in our rear. We still have to silence heavy Soviet coastal batteries, the huge guns of which have been turned inland and shell us incessantly."

As the end drew near Russian commandos made a daring landing at Yalta on the Crimean coast well behind the enemy lines, and Sevastopol's defenders themselves delivered an almost incessant series of counter-attacks. But the enemy came on in inexhaustible strength. Fort Malakhov was stormed on June 30, and on the same day it was claimed that Rumanian troops in a rapid advance had taken the harbour and town of Balaclava. The next day the Germans were in Sevastopol itself. But there were no negotiations for surrender, no appeal even for an armistice. Days later von Mannstein was reported to be capturing the city street by street, even house by house, since the Russians, both garrison and civilian population, refused to lay down their arms.

"The Germans have gained nothing but a heap of ruins," said Moscow radio; and "Let us fight like the men of Sevastopol" became the Russian people's slogan.

Last Days in the Verdun of the Soviets

It was announced from Hitler's headquarters on July 1 that Sevastopol had fallen to German and Rumanian troops under the command of Colonel-General Mannstein, supported by Col.-Gen. Richthofen's air forces, after 25 days of the fiercest fighting. The photograph on the right shows Nazi infantry attacking Soviet defences.

The greatest heroism was shown by Russian nurses in tending the wounded under fire. Below is Medical Nurse Antipova rendering first aid to a wounded Russian commander during the defence of Sevastopol. For eight months the Russians held out against the enemy, and it is computed that its capture cost Hitler 100,000 dead.
Photos, Keystone, Planet News

Much of the life of beleaguered Sevastopol was carried on in caves and artificially-constructed shelters carved out of the rock on which the city is built. Centre right, Russian women are sewing underwear and other warm garments for the defenders of Sevastopol in one of these underground places of refuge.

Anti-aircraft gunners on a Soviet armoured train beating off an enemy raid in the Sevastopol sector. Dive-bombing played an important part in the Nazi plan for reducing the fortress. Bombers screamed down in power dives incessantly, dropping their loads, returning to their bases 25 miles away, and attacking again within half-an-hour.
Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright.

THE WAR AT SEA

by **Francis E. McMurtrie**

With the rapid advance of General Rommel's forces over the Egyptian frontier and past Mersa Matruh, the idea seems to have arisen in many minds that our fleet in the Eastern Mediterranean would have no alternative but to retreat at once through the Suez Canal into the Red Sea.

In fact, this by no means follows in such event. Should the invaders reach Alexandria it would deprive the fleet of its principal base, with most of the extensive resources that have been concentrated there. Nor is there another port available which can compare with Alexandria so far as strategic position and harbour facilities are concerned. Port Said might be a useful substitute, were it not for the obvious fact that, with Alexandria in enemy hands, a position only 145 miles away would soon become untenable. It may be assumed, therefore, that the bases from which our warships would continue to operate would be Haifa and Beirut, the principal ports of Palestine and Syria.

Haifa is quite a modern city, with a harbour on which large sums have been spent in recent years. Beirut, though much older, has been improved considerably under the French regime in Syria. Cruisers and destroyers could make good use of both ports.

Another problem which has aroused public anxiety is the fate of the French squadron laid up at Alexandria. This comprises the old battleship Lorraine, of 22,189 tons displacement, armed with eight 13·4-inch guns; the heavy cruisers Suffren (9,938 tons), Duquesne and Tourville (both 10,000 tons), all three armed with eight 8-inch guns; the cruiser Duguay-Trouin, 7,249 tons and eight 6·1-inch guns; the destroyers Basque, Forbin and Le Fortuné, each 1,378 tons, four 5·1-inch guns and six torpedo tubes; and the submarine Protée, 1,379 tons, one 3·9-inch gun and eleven torpedo tubes.

It was in the first week of July 1940 that an agreement was reached between Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet, and Admiral Godfroy, commanding the French squadron at Alexandria, by which the latter force was immobilized. All ammunition, torpedo warheads, breech-blocks of guns, and oil fuel were landed, and the crews repatriated to France, with the exception of small parties of shipkeepers.

In the event of Alexandria being endangered there is no doubt good care would be taken to ensure that these French ships should not fall into enemy hands. Presumably they would be taken through the Suez Canal to some safe port a considerable distance away; indeed, the naval base at Diego Suarez, Madagascar, occupied by British forces last May, has been mentioned in this connexion. Failing their removal, it may be regarded as certain that steps would be taken to render the ships useless to the Germans or Italians, i.e. they would be blown up or sunk if that became necessary.

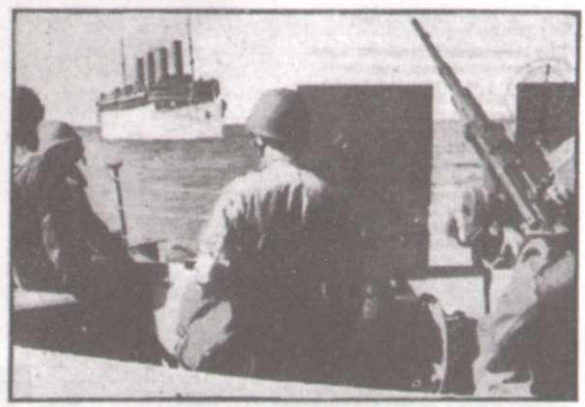
Casualties suffered in the convoy actions in the Central Mediterranean in the middle of June comprised a cruiser and six destroyers, the names of which have now been released. They were H.M.S. Hermione, a cruiser of 5,450 tons launched in 1939, and armed with ten 5·25-inch "dual-purpose" guns; and the destroyers Bedouin, 1,870 tons; Nestor, 1,690 tons; Hasty, 1,350 tons; Airedale, Grove, and Kujawiak, each of 904 tons. The Nestor belonged to the Royal Australian Navy and the Kujawiak to the Polish Navy.

It is understood that the Hermione was torpedoed by an enemy submarine while returning to her base, and that the Nestor was sunk by our own forces after she had been disabled in action with hostile aircraft.

Enemy losses on this occasion, it should be noted, included one Italian cruiser of 10,000 tons, two destroyers and a submarine sunk, a battleship seriously damaged, and at least 65 and probably 87 aircraft destroyed. We lost 30 aircraft.

In the United States the decision has been taken to suspend for the time being the construction of five huge battleships of 65,000 tons that were ordered last year, and concentrate upon building more aircraft-carriers. Six battle cruisers of about 27,000 tons, the Alaska, Guam, Hawaii, Philippines, Puerto Rico and Samoa, will be re-designed and completed as aircraft-carriers, as will a number of the 10,000-ton cruisers of the Cleveland class, 32 of which are being built.

In view of the important part which naval aircraft have played in the Pacific, there can be no doubt that this decision is a wise one.



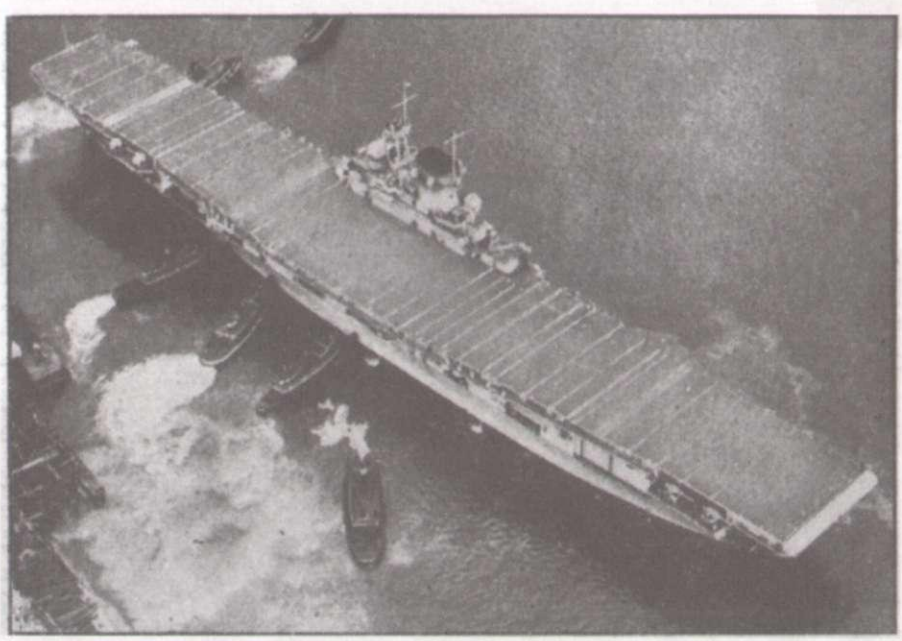
ATLANTIC ESCORT. Even before America's entry into the war U.S. warships played a great part in convoying ships to Britain, but of late months their work has been greatly intensified. This photo was taken on a U.S. escort vessel engaged on convoy work in the North Atlantic; beyond is one of the ships of the convoy. *Photo, New York Times Photos*

Not only are the Axis Powers inferior to the Allies in the number of their capital ships, but the United States Navy already has ten new battleships approaching completion or well advanced in construction. These are the 45,000-ton Iowa, New Jersey, Missouri, Wisconsin, Illinois and Kentucky, and the 35,000-ton South Dakota, Massachusetts, Indiana and Alabama. With this margin of superiority in capital ships, it is far more urgent to complete additional aircraft-carriers with which to follow up the heavy blow dealt to the Japanese Navy off Midway Island early in June. It is now known that the enemy losses in that action included the four aircraft-carriers Akagi and Kaga, both of 26,000 tons, Soryu and Hiryu, both of 10,050 tons. Adding these to the destruction of the Ryukaku, of 20,000 tons, in the Coral Sea fighting, it is clear that Japan has been deprived of 60 per cent of her aircraft-carrier tonnage, without taking into consideration the heavy damage believed to have been inflicted on the Syokaku of 20,000 tons.

In these circumstances it may be expected that arrangements will be made to build as rapidly as possible a considerable number of medium-sized aircraft-carriers, which could not only be completed in less time than bigger ships, but would involve a smaller loss of material and personnel if sunk.

At the same time, no doubt, every endeavour will be made to deliver at an early date those aircraft-carriers of larger size already in hand, such as H.M.S. Implacable and Indefatigable, of 23,000 tons, due for completion this year; and the 11 American ships of the Essex class, ordered in 1941, which are reported to be of about 25,000 tons. Quite a number of new merchantship hulls are known to have been converted into escort aircraft-carriers, for duty in convoy protection.

It is possible that in the not far distant future a new design of capital ship will be evolved, in which the strong protection of the present-day type of battleship will be combined with flight deck accommodation for a considerable number of aircraft, including torpedo-bombers and fighters.



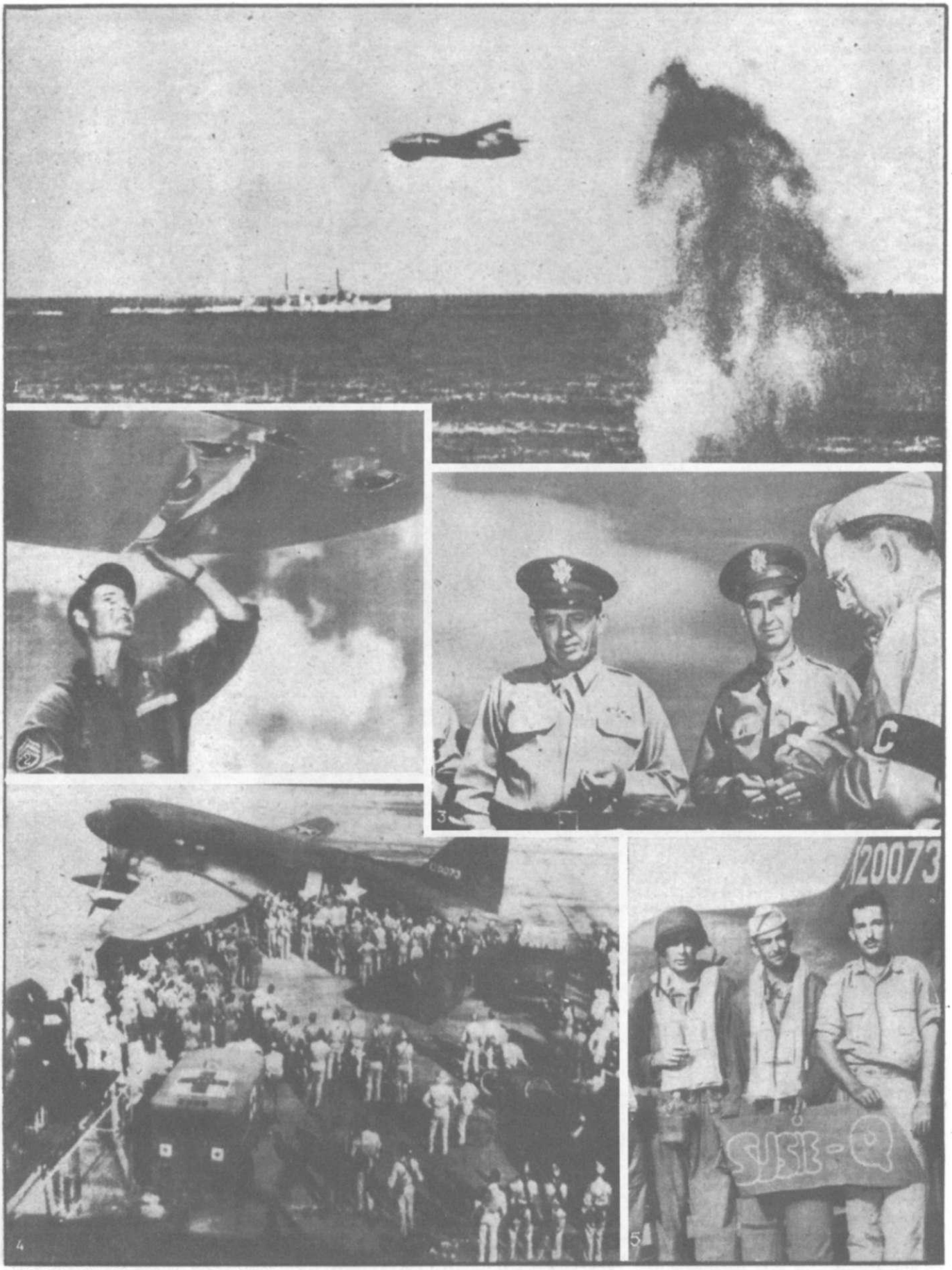
U.S. AIRCRAFT-CARRIER WASP which, it was revealed on July 1, recently accomplished ferry trips to the Mediterranean carrying aeroplane reinforcements for beleaguered Malta. On one occasion R.A.F. fighters, after taking off from the Wasp, went straight into action with the enemy over Malta. This photograph was taken in December 1939, as the new 21-million-dollar ship left a yard of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation. *Photo, New York Times Photos*

Another Torpedo for the Battle of the Seas

SUPERCHARGED WITH DEATH, a torpedo, fresh from the factory, is being manoeuvred into position for loading into one of our submarines. The torpedo has proved to be one of the deadliest weapons ever invented. During 1914-18 no fewer than 4,000 merchant ships of all nationalities were destroyed by torpedoes, and in this war the tonnage of naval and other craft lost has reached astronomical figures. All modern torpedoes are driven by compressed air.

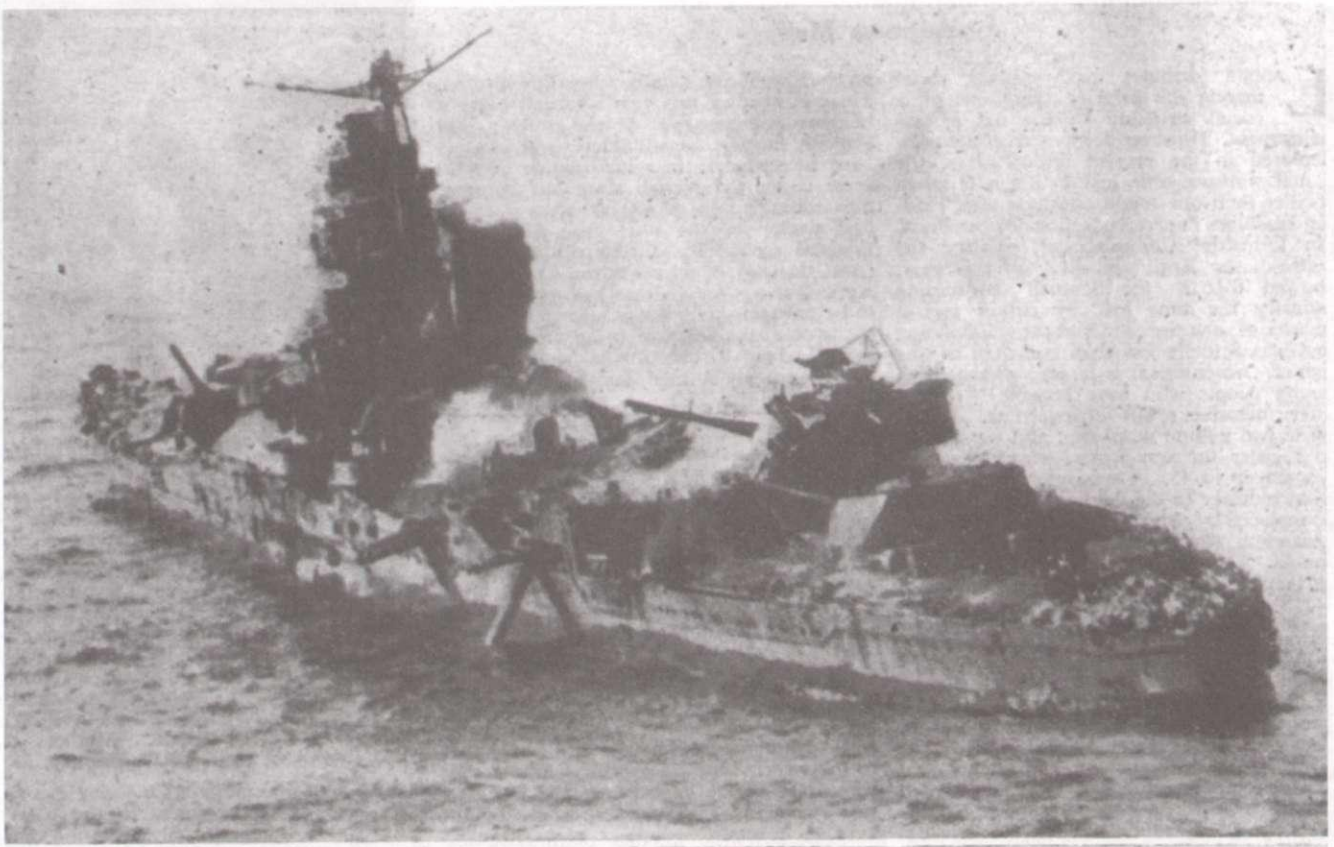
Photo, Associated Press

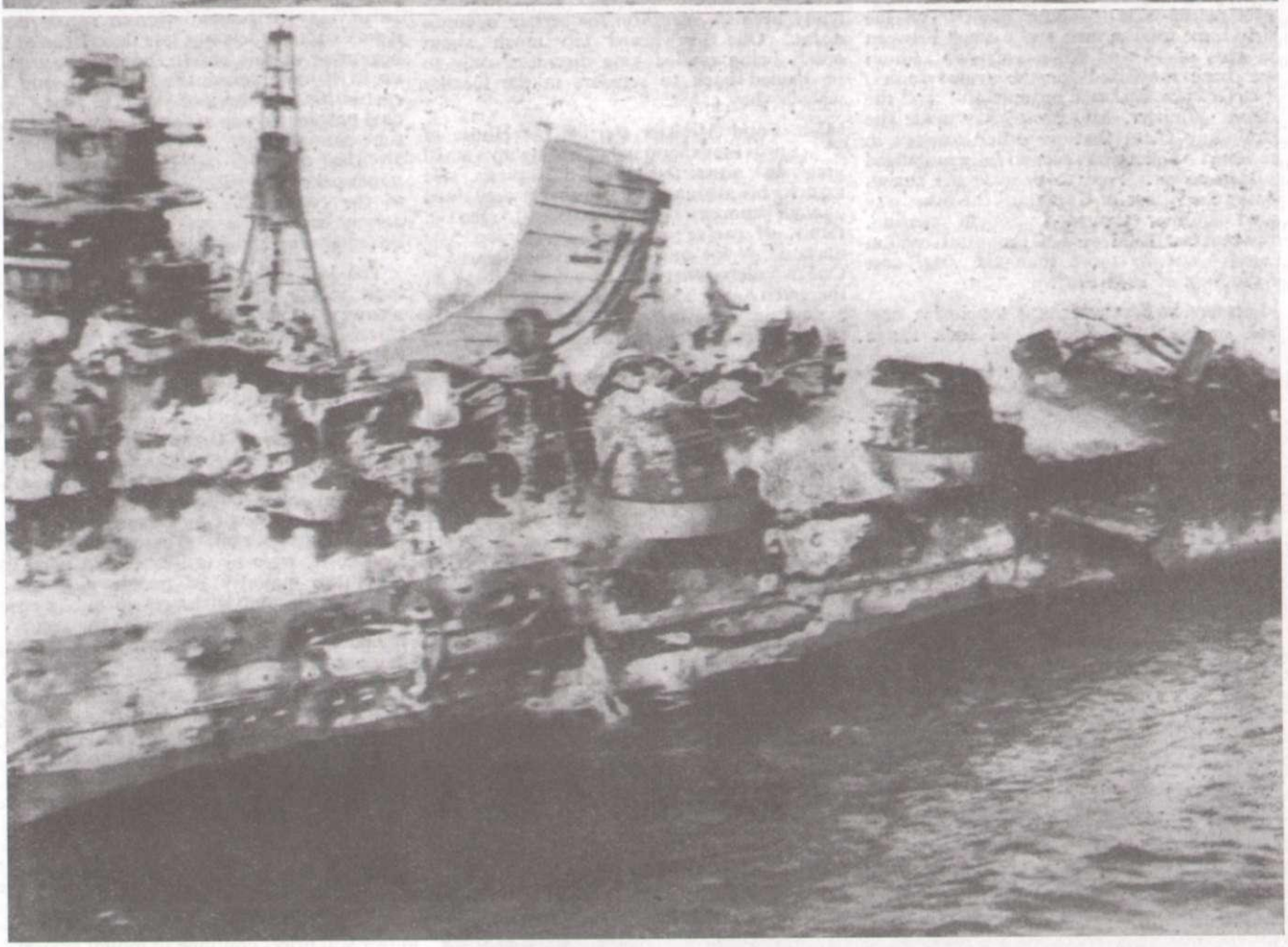
Welcome Home to the Victors of Midway



HEROES OF MIDWAY ISLAND BATTLE, (4) in this page of Midway photos, being greeted by their comrades at Oahu Field, Hawaii. 1, U.S. destroyer and army bomber circling a column of smoke marking a crashed Japanese plane ; 2, an air sergeant at Oahu Field examining the damaged windflap of a Flying Fortress ; 3, Maj.-Gen. W. H. Hale and Lt.-Col. W. C. Sweeney, Jr., being interviewed on their return ; 5, name-plate of a B-26 Medium Bomber, all that was worth salvaging after the plane returned to its base. *Photos, Keystone*

Bombed Into Ruin by America's Flyers





JAPANESE CRUISER, of the Mogami class, after she had been bombed by American naval planes in the Battle of Midway Island during the first week in June. (See pages 54 and 61.) Superstructures have been reduced to scrap-iron and the whole deck is a mass of flame and smoke. Top, a terrifying impression of the shattered monster, her guns knocked out, with one dipping towards the sea, a cauldron of fire amidships, and sailors huddled at stern and bows.

Photos, Keystone

THE HOME FRONT

by **Augustus Muir**

LABOUR disputes have always been among the primary symptoms of a social structure in the act of readjustment. However deeply strikes are to be deplored in the present critical days, the actual working time lost by them is much smaller than one might conclude after reading headlines in certain sections of the Press. An Industrial Commissioner, quoting the statistics for April and May of this year, showed that in the Scottish coal-mining industry the time lost by strikes was a quarter of one per cent, and the shipbuilding loss was actually less than one-sixth of this figure. Absenteeism is largely attributed to young people who have become "stale" after intensive spells of overtime. Meanwhile two million more men and women are to register for war work: men up to 50, women up to 45. Young men transplanted from industry to the fighting forces will thus be replaced by older operatives; and rapidly-expanding war factories will have fresh personnel. The problem of the key-worker must be tackled with constructive imagination.

The President of the Amalgamated Engineering Union has warned engineers that the "fluidity of labour" is of signal importance; it might be necessary, for instance, to move arms workers to shipbuilding. As one industry reaches saturation point, a switch-over of personnel will be vital in the achieving and maintaining of 100 per cent production. To this end the Ministry of Supply has been cooperating with the Ministry of Labour to complete schemes for a nation-wide "labour pool." Of the thirty-three million men and women between the ages of 14 and 65, twenty-two million have been mobilized for the armed forces, Civil Defence, and war production; and the Labour Minister, Mr. Bevin, has made the resounding claim that no other country in the world's history has ever so fully mobilized its man-power. And to provide the sinews of war the House of Commons the other day voted another thousand million sterling. This makes a total of ten thousand million pounds—already more than the *total* cost of the War of 1914-1918.

Farmers in Scotland have touched a new peak in potato planting, and look for a production of over a million tons this autumn. There is word of this year's harvest being a bumper one generally in the north; and Scottish farmers, smallholders, and crofters have succeeded in bringing another 200,000 acres under the plough since last autumn, thus adding a total of 600,000 acres since the first winter of the war. The figures for England are no less encouraging; and the latest demand of Mr. Hudson, Minister of Agriculture, is for another half-million acres to be brought under the plough this autumn. City volunteers are now being mobilized all over England to help in the harvest; land clubs are being formed, and school children will spend holidays in harvest camps. It is estimated that 20,000 boys and girls will have enrolled with farmers by August.

TOPICS

Time Lost by Strikes · New Call-Up for War Industry · A "Labour Pool" · Cost of the War · A Bumper Harvest · The Woolton Food Zones · Control of Milk Distribution · Coal and the Miner · Cut in Motor Coach Services · Help for Small Traders · Government Control Tightening.

With a sharp pencil and large-scale map, Lord Woolton has divided the United Kingdom into sectors, each being a new food zone. This will mean a big drop in the cost of distribution, for retailers will be obliged to draw their supplies only from wholesalers within their zone boundary; and the edict will affect 15s. of every 20s. spent by the average housewife. Similar plans have already been in operation for certain commodities. One has heard too much about goods being carried long distances, only to be hauled back to retailers in the locality whence they came.

THE Food Minister startled the House of Lords the other day by holding up a small green disk about the size of a 5s. piece. He assured his astounded peers that it contained enough concentrated vegetables to feed a family of twelve: "Fresh vegetables," he declared, "for our troops in the desert!" One wonders what our troops will think of the green agglomerate! But there is news of a new dried meat process that will mean a saving in cargo space: indeed, caterers have been putting the dried meat through drastic tests, and even "customer reaction" is being tabulated.

FISHERMAN HOME GUARD on Holy Island, near Berwick-upon-Tweed. His is, indeed, a full-time war job. *Photo, Keystone*

In October Lord Woolton will become the world's biggest milkman, for the Milk Marketing Board will then be the *sole* buyer of milk from British producers. In every urban district of more than 10,000 people associations of dairymen are being formed to cut anomalies in supply; and the marketing of milk will be controlled at every stage from farm to housewife. Mothers and children will, of course, have priority.

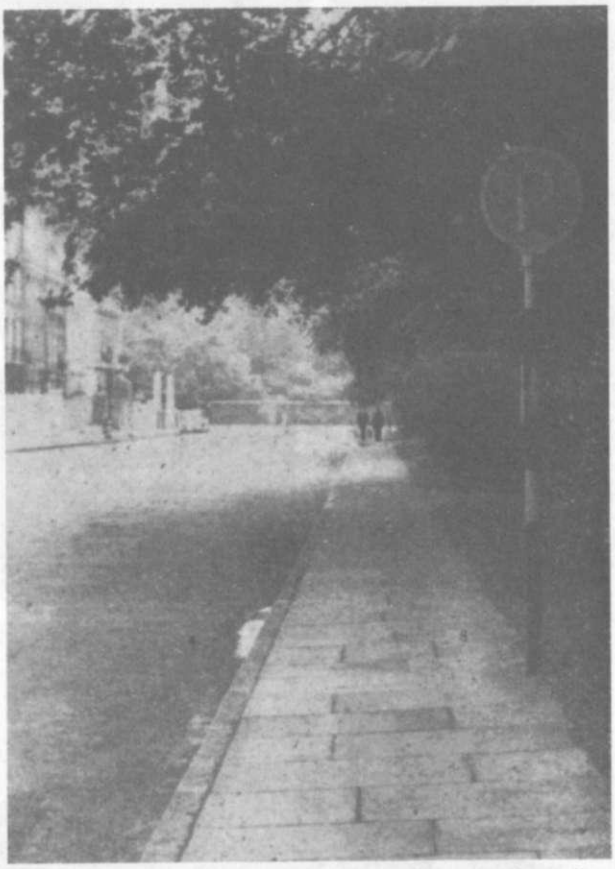
The housewife with a far-seeing eye (and memories of chill winters in the past) is thinking of her coal supply. No more than 28 lb. may be bought without registration; if one's total stock was less than 1 ton at the beginning of this month, one may purchase up to 10 cwt. before the end of it, and the cost is 10s. per ton more than in June. The coal problem is one of the biggest of our war-time conundrums. Absolute justice to all is an ideal hard to achieve. Justice to the mineworker is no less important than justice to the consumer. And there is the great hungry maw of a war industry that must be fed by day and by night.

The last drops of petrol saved from the basic ration will soon be no more than a memory. The month of July was finally thrown at the motor-car user, rather like a last bone to an eager-eyed dog; and until midnight of the 31st the motorist may use the last driblet left in his tank. After that date no civilian motor-car will be allowed on the roads of Great Britain unless the owner has proved to the satisfaction of his local Petroleum Officer that he is using his car for essential purposes—and "essential" is a word that will be cleaned to the very bone as time goes on. There will be no more long costly trips by taxi-cab. But what will affect the majority of people in a much more drastic way is the cut in public coach services. We may as well face the fact: all travelling is discouraged except for journeys that are necessary.

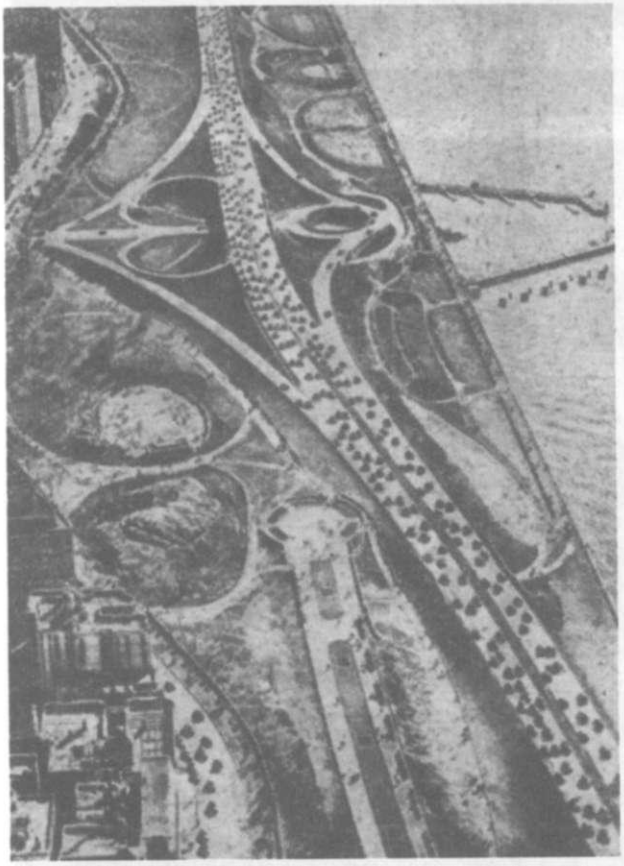
OF vital interest to small traders whose profits have vanished with the scarcity of goods is the Government proposal of assisted liquidation. This should ameliorate many a difficult case where the shopkeeper has been grimly hanging on with bankruptcy as the only certain thing in an uncertain future. On the other hand, some traders are flourishing. In secondhand furniture, for example, scarcity has been the fluent excuse for prices having doubled and trebled. But the Board of Trade is taking control; no longer will prices continue to mount skyward. The entire basis of commodity trading is being radically revised, and Government control is tightening upon every branch of our lives.

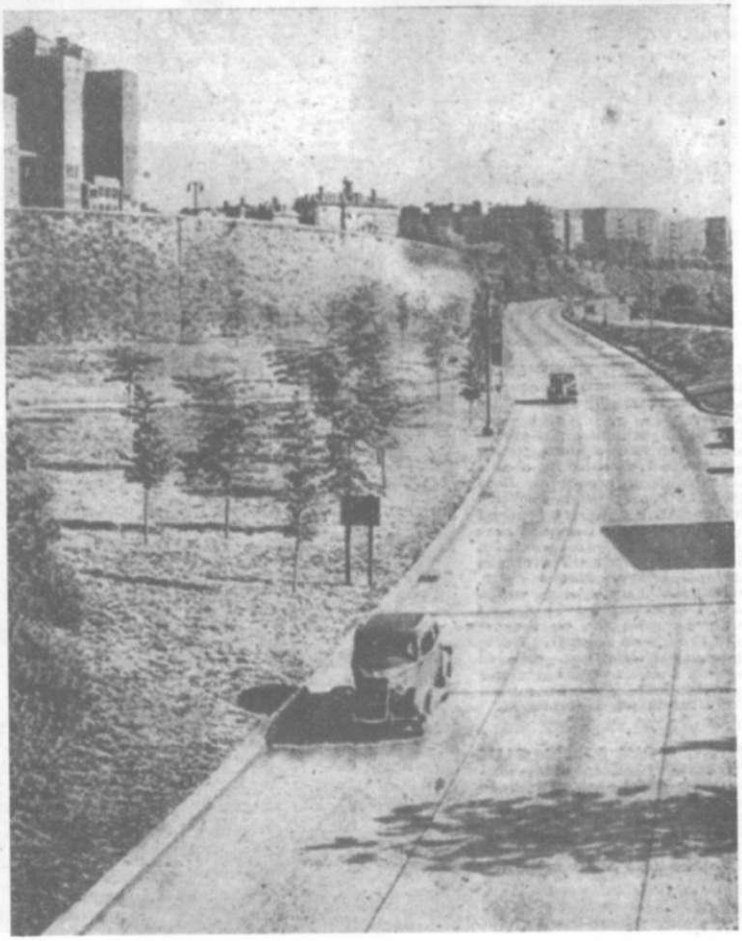
'MATILDAS' FOR RUSSIA being shipped at a British port. Such is a daily scene at certain docks where convoys for munitions assemble to collect the "tools" which British workmen are making to help their Soviet comrades. *Photo, Central Press*

Pleasure Motoring Stops 'for the Duration'



IN LONDON, one solitary car in Lincoln's Inn Fields, on the morning of July 1, 1942, when the "no pleasure motoring" order came into force. The parking-sign remains as a relic of the car age. Left, the effect of the new law in the Strand.





IN NEW YORK, West Side Highway before and (right) after petrol restriction. Whereas cars used to be numbered in hundreds a minute, now with the rationing of "gas" they are few and far between.

Photos, Topical Press

King and People in the Eye of the Camera

WORKERS OF THE WEEK above, Mr. Richard Harris, army aircraft employee, who helps to make our great bomber raids possible. Mr. Harris has worked for the aircraft industry for ten years and, in his spare time, he is an Air Training Corps instructor. Right, Mr. Fred Shapley, 44-year-old foreman of the tool room in a Midlands Royal Ordnance factory, which he improvised from some old machinery and a shed. The whole works is now dependent on his shop.

KING GEORGE on the occasion of the royal visit to American troops in Northern Ireland. His Majesty spent eight hours with the troops, carried out an inspection and assisted at manoeuvres. In this photograph King George is seen riding in an American "Jeep" army car driven by Lieut. Russell F. Mann, of Oxford, Iowa.

SURBITON'S ANSWER to the loss of the Borough's adopted warship, the Wild Swan, which cost over £500,000, was to begin saving another half million to replace the vessel. At a presentation ceremony on June 25 the Mayor handed Vice-Admiral Sir Robert Hornell a replica of the Borough coat of arms, and received from Sir Robert a replica of the ship's badge. Above right, H.M.S. Wild Swan, which was attacked by 12 enemy bombers off the west coast of France on June 17. Badly damaged, she also collided with a Spanish trawler and sank, but six German aircraft were destroyed.

THE NEW STEN GUN (right) is being mass-produced at Royal Ordnance factories at a cost of less than £2 each. It can be fired as an automatic, or used for single shot firing, either from the shoulder or from the hip.

Photos, B.B.C., Associated Press, New York Times Photos, Wright & Logan, Sport & General

I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

They Quite Like Us A.R.P. Wardens Now!

Reprinted from the Manchester Guardian, this article by Bernard Lennon affords an interesting and amusing sidelight on the changing attitude towards the "P.B.I." of Civil Defence brought about by the experience of "blitz" conditions.

"THE P.B.I. of Civil Defence—that's us," said old Mattinson when the wardens brought up the rear of the parade held in connexion with Warship Week. "Mugs all along the line," he said afterwards. "Remember before the war started?"

Most of us did remember. About the time of Munich there had been the distribution of respirators, to use the official phrase, though by the time the work was accomplished neither the recipients nor the distributors indulged in such high-flown language. The wardens were blamed for all the discomforts of the long queue. They were told repeatedly why other centres and different hours would have been more convenient.

It is doubtful whether even that ordeal was as bad as the calls we made on householders a month or two before the war began. Had everybody in the house a gas mask? Had a gas chamber been prepared? Had everyone received a carton for his or her gas mask? What were the dimensions of the garden or the backyard? The responses could hardly be called warm. There was little open opposition, to be sure, but there was no lack of looks to express the thoughts which were not put into words. We were told there was not going to be a war and were left to imagine what kind of lunatics we were to be wasting our own and other people's time on fools' errands. Many people seemed to take delight in letting us stand on the doorstep in pouring rain or a cutting wind. Even the friends on whom we called seemed to consider us fanatics who had to be humoured.

We remembered all this and we remembered old Mattinson's comment on the wardens when it was announced not so long ago that we had to undertake a house-to-house examination of gas masks, and we showed little enthusiasm. The work was to be done in pairs, and partners made their arrangements in an atmosphere of mutual commiseration.

On the night that Conway and I began our rounds there was a biting wind with occasional squalls of rain. We had visions of ourselves standing on doorsteps while mocking eyes watched our numbed fingers fumbling with head-harness, stretching the face-piece, testing the elasticity of the rubber band, removing and replacing the inlet valve. We discussed whether a truculent or an apologetic tone would be the more suitable and compromised on politeness. We knocked at our first door. It opened.

"We have called on behalf of the Wardens' Service. Could we see the gas masks, please?" "Yes, certainly. Come in. Come in. It's cold out there."

Conway and I looked at one another, and I saw his eyebrows lift as we followed the young woman into the house. "It's the wardens, mother," she called out as she went to gather the family respirators together. When we had passed them both mother and daughter became talkative, treating us as if we were the confidants of the C.I.G.S. Would Hitler use gas next time? When would the war be over? We extricated ourselves with soothing words and wondered whether this treatment was a flash in the pan.

At the next house we were also asked in. The gas masks were again brought forth promptly and readily. The examiners were again treated as a cross between Delphic oracles and experts in the higher strategy.

It was the same all that evening and the next evening and every evening till our area was completed. We were received with smiles and allowed with reluctance to depart. We were offered cups of tea, biscuits, even cigarettes. We were overwhelmed with sympathy at having to spend our valuable time like this. "You shouldn't be coming here," said one man. "You ought to make us come to you." Then he proudly showed us the piece of railway line which had embedded itself in his asphalt garden path.

Apologies were showered on us if anyone had mislaid a mask and had kept us waiting, or if we had had to call a second or third time at a house before finding anyone at home.

Our experience was not exceptional. Every warden reported the same welcome, the same readiness to comply, the same desire for advice, the same belief in the wardens' omniscience.

"Perhaps," suggested someone, "it was the uniform that did the trick." "Don't you believe it," said old Mattinson. "Remember that we had a blitz last year."

"And what about the wardens now? Do you still think they're the Poor Blooming Infantry of Civil Defence?" "Maybe I wasn't so far wrong as you seem to think," retorted Mattinson, who was a corporal in the K.O.R.L. a quarter of a century ago. "The P.B.I. won the last war, didn't they?"

'HOW'S YOUR RESPIRATOR?' A familiar scene during the recent overhaul of gas masks, as the Civil Defence warden goes from house to house about his duty.

Daily I Thanked My Lucky Star—and the French

An Englishman who lived in Occupied France from June 1940 to October 1941, expecting daily to be caught by the Germans, gave this account of the friendly help he received from the French until he reached safety at Lisbon.

BEFORE the war I was working in Nantes and when war broke out I sent my wife and boy to England and carried on with my job. When the Germans arrived I was unable to get away and had to remain in Nantes, where I was helped by French friends. After some six weeks there was a general tightening-up by the German authorities, and I had to move. I thought that Paris was the best place in which to hide until I could get out of Occupied France.

In Paris, thanks to many French friends, I lived for fifteen months, until October 1941. I had no money and no papers except my British passport. What was perhaps worse was that I was unable to get ration cards. However, all the French people I met were pleased and anxious to help me. They kept me supplied with food, sharing their own scanty rations, and supplied me with lodgings. I had to change my address several times, although I was always careful to see that I was not being followed on my way home. Every day I thanked my lucky star—and the French—for every day I expected to be caught by the Germans.

At night if by accident I was unable to get back home before the curfew I went with friends to a cabaret or to a café, which remained open all night, and there I had to remain until five o'clock in the morning, rubbing shoulders with drunken Germans. Sometimes a German would speak to me and I would reply in my best French, but the French and the Germans kept very much apart in such places. Often in the Underground French people would look at the

SEARCHING THE RUINS, an A.R.P. squad among the debris of a house at Bath. Civil Defence, which was once regarded by the public as a kind of joke, if not a nuisance, is now recognized as an essential and honoured part of the great war for freedom. A warden recounts some recent experiences in this page. *Photo, Sport & General*

BOUND FOR TOBRUK was this naval stores ship before the fall of the Libyan stronghold. A writer in this page describes how certain British ships got away from Tobruk under enemy fire.
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Germans sitting around and then look at me and solemnly wink. They could see that I was English.

At one of my lodgings I used to go down to the "loge" of the concierge to play "belote" with him and to listen to the B.B.C. One night I asked the concierge what he would reply if he were asked by the authorities to identify me. "My dear sir," he replied, "you are not one of my tenants. I have never seen you before, and I have never seen you visiting one of my tenants. 'Belote, et rebelote.'"

Finally I got down near to the "line." How I crossed the line I cannot explain, but I succeeded in getting out of France and into Portugal.

I believe that practically all the French people will welcome the English with open arms when they land in France—ask them what happened at St. Nazaire. This did not surprise me, for in all the fifteen months I was in Paris I met many people in the streets who had known me before the war, but not once was I in danger of being denounced. I hope there will be a special decoration after the war for those people who, at the risk of their lives, helped me and others, without hope of reward, to hide from the Germans.—*The Manchester Guardian*

Our Ship Was Shelled by Tanks at Tobruk

How British warships, with naval demolition parties, escaped at the last minute from Tobruk harbour under the guns of German batteries and tanks is told here by a young naval officer who was among the last to leave.

THOUGH there was no organized evacuation of Tobruk, the defenders were determined to reorganize and fight their way out. Tobruk town and harbour had been shelled for some days fairly heavily, but not until Saturday, June 20, did the bombardment become really vicious. The Germans used everything they had from two-inch shells upwards, even anti-tank guns.

Bombing was going on on the other side of the escarpment with Junkers 88s and Stukas coming over all the time, blasting the gun positions and concentrating on one gun at a time to knock them out in preparation for the tank charge. No bombing was directed at us. In fact, as far as the Navy was concerned, the bombing and shelling were more of nuisance value than anything else, and we continued with our work as if nothing was happening. But on Saturday afternoon the big stuff started to come over. I had been on coastal patrol the night before, so had turned in and slept despite the bombardment. When I got up at 3.30 p.m. it was not very bad, although things were popping off all over the place. I left the building in which I had been sleeping at four o'clock and met some troops who had just come down the escarpment. They told us that they had been cut off by the enemy. This was the first we knew of the break-through.

At about five o'clock all naval personnel having any kind of arms were ordered to fall in. Only a few naval units and one small schooner were in the harbour at this time. From the time the road was cut four days previously most of Tobruk's supplies had been brought by sea—as during the last siege. I was told to bring my craft alongside and did so. We stood by there awaiting orders for about two hours, while the demolition parties carried out their duties.

The next thing I saw was five or six German tanks on the other side of the escarpment. We saw four or five of our soldiers shoot up one of the tanks and then plunge into the water and swim to a small boat in which they pulled over to us.

In the evening we learned officially that there had been a general break-through. I rang up headquarters from a gun position and was told this. About this time the German tanks were coming over the hill from the east down the road into the town, backed by armoured cars. Then the order came—be ready to move.

Then the enemy put over the biggest bombardment I have ever seen. Tanks were firing at the ships while the harbour and town were being shelled and bombed. All kinds of ammunition were used. Shells and bombs were exploding all around, but we suffered no casualties.

The armoured forces were now so close that we were ordered to sail. All ships had been made ready with steam up since the siege began. I could not get my ship—a small craft—away because she had been hit by a shell. We hopped ashore and saw all the ships leaving. I got aboard another vessel just as she was letting go and we all moved out. There were shells falling all around now and we had one hit. At this time we were in a rather isolated corner of the harbour and could not see if any ships took on troops before leaving. The ships were firing pom-poms and other light weapons at the enemy and the din was terrific.

As we moved out the enemy put down a curtain of shells from guns of every kind over the boom entrance, so that all ships would have to pass through it. We went through at full speed and were not hit.

Then Stukas arrived and bombed the town. Up to the last half-hour no damage had been done to any of the few important or inhabited buildings in the town, and when we left four buildings which were not hit in the previous bombardments were still standing.

Naval demolition squads blew up everything essential before we left. Certain craft had been detailed to stay behind for demolition parties, practically all of whom were taken off. They continued working until the last moment, even when enemy armoured forces were in the town.

There were only naval personnel in the town—the Army were all around it. Practically everyone in the town or on the shore managed to get away in craft, but the bulk of the army was left behind. By the time the last ship left the enemy armoured forces were all around the harbour.—*Reuter*

We Laid Mines in Enemy Waters

A recurring and often little-noted item of news is that "mines were laid in enemy waters." Here, broadcast by a Flight Lieutenant on minelaying duty, is an account of what that operation entails.

THE other night we set off in one of our bombers for those enemy waters in which our mine was to be laid. A mine is really a sort of delay-action bomb dropped into the water. You see it flop out of the aircraft and go sailing down on its parachute. It sinks into the water very quietly; no flame, no flash, no leaping debris such as a big bomb may make. The mine just sits there waiting. Just think what it means to the enemy, that night after night British aircraft buzz round that long coastline from Narvik to Bordeaux, along which its convoys must go carrying the products of occupied Europe. The convoys must hug the shore, or else our bombers, motor torpedo boats or submarines will get them. But along those shores, in the shallow waters, our mine-

laying aircraft have been at work the night before.

It was a dirty night on which we went out, with cloud down to within a few hundred feet above the sea. We flew above it. The trouble with flying above cloud like that is that you may not be able to tell where you are, and your mine must be dropped just where you want it. However, for us that night the question largely solved itself.

As soon as we reckoned we were off the enemy coast we began to see searchlights and flak. Those of our crew who had been in these parts a good many times before had little difficulty in fixing our position. Soon we found a flak barrage going up to port as well as to starboard. That told us definitely where we were. Down through the cloud we went, lower and lower. At last we came out of the greyness, and then just a few feet below was the sea, rough and brown and cold, and too near for comfort. Back we went into the cloud.

Immediately I heard the bomb-aimer's voice over the inter-com.: "Bomb doors open." Then I heard a clonk as the mine was released. Then the bomb-aimer's voice: "Bomb gone," the pilot's voice: "Bomb doors shut." On the way home I thought, "Well, it's there."

Probably, of course, the enemy knows that these channels are now dangerous, but, if so, it means that all his convoys will have to put in to port. For days, probably, a fleet of his minesweepers will have to come out seeking for what we've dropped. Maybe they won't find it, or maybe our mine will be detected and swept up. But then, just as the channels are clear again, the next dark night they will hear the drone of our bombers. They will wonder if all those channels aren't dangerous again. And maybe they will be, or maybe somewhere else will be.

GERMAN MINESWEEPERS operating in the North Sea. How mines are laid by British in enemy waters from an aeroplane forms the subject of an article in this and the preceding pages.
Photo, Planet News

Then they'll have to decide whether to send the convoys through and risk half-a-dozen laden ships going to the bottom, or start their sweeping all over again. For this is one of the great advantages of dropping mines from aircraft. A minelayer or a submarine can't revisit a minefield once it's been laid; if it did, it would probably be blown up on its own mines. But an aircraft can come back and back, keeping up the supply, laying more mines just after the enemy has swept up the old ones.—*The Listener.*

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

JUNE 24, 1942, Wednesday *1,026th day*

Russian Front.—Heavy fighting continued on Kharkov front.

Africa.—British withdrew from Sollum and Sidi Omar.

China.—A.V.G. raided Hankow and other Jap bases.

Australasia.—Allied reconnaissance 'planes over Kendari, Celebes.

Home.—Five enemy raiders shot down in attacks on Midlands and E. Anglia.

JUNE 25, Thursday *1,027th day*

Air.—More than 1,000 R.A.F. bombers raided Bremen.

Russian Front.—Russians evacuated Kupiansk, S.E. of Kharkov.

Mediterranean.—Our submarines torpedoed three supply ships.

Africa.—Rommel's main forces advanced on Matruh.

Burma.—R.A.F. bombers raided Akyab.

Australasia.—Allied air raids on Dilli, Salamaua and Rabaul. Jap fighters intercepted over Port Moresby.

Home.—Major-Gen. Eisenhower, commander of U.S. Forces in European Theatre, in London.

JUNE 26, Friday *1,028th day*

Russian Front.—Heavy fighting in Kharkov and Sevastopol sectors.

Africa.—Rommel's forces 15 miles from Matruh.

U.S.A.—Jap shore installations at Kiska, Aleutians, raided by U.S. bombers.

JUNE 27, Saturday *1,029th day*

Air.—Another heavy raid by R.A.F. bombers on Bremen.

Russian Front.—Several attacks on Sevastopol repelled.

Africa.—Our forces closed with the enemy round Mersa Matruh.

Pacific.—U.S. bombers flew 2,000 miles from Hawaii to bomb Wake Island.

Australasia.—Night raids by Allied bombers on Tulagi, Lae and Salamaua.

JUNE 28, Sunday *1,030th day*

Air.—Submarine base at St. Nazaire bombed by night.

Russian Front.—Germans started offensive in Kursk area, 100 miles N. of Kharkov.

Africa.—Heavy fighting continued round Mersa Matruh.

Australasia.—Allied land forces made a raid on Jap garrison at Salamaua, New Guinea.

U.S.A.—U.S. army bombers again attacked Kiska, Aleutians.

JUNE 29, Monday *1,031st day*

Air.—Strong force of R.A.F. bombers raided Bremen.

Russian Front.—Heavy German tank attacks repelled at Kursk; German advance at Sevastopol.

Africa.—Mersa Matruh evacuated by our troops.

JUNE 30, Tuesday *1,032nd day*

Russian Front.—Attacks at Kursk and Sevastopol still being held by Russians.

Africa.—No large-scale fighting; Germans reported to have passed El Daba.

Indian Ocean.—S. African land and air forces officially stated to be in Madagascar.

Australasia.—Allied bombers raided Lae and Rabaul.

JULY 1, Wednesday *1,033rd day*

Russian Front.—Germans claimed capture of Sevastopol.

Africa.—German tanks and infantry attacked our positions at El Alamein.

China.—American Army Air Force raided Hankow aerodrome.

Australasia.—Allied bombers attacked airfield at Kendari, Celebes, making 1,700-mile flight.

JULY 2, Thursday *1,034th day*

Air.—Powerful force of bombers again raided Bremen.

Russian Front.—Fighting developed in Bielgorod and Volchansk direction.

Africa.—German attack on El Alamein continued. Allied bombers made heavy raid on Tobruk.

Indian Ocean.—British forces occupied island of Mayotte, between Madagascar and Africa.

Australasia.—Allied bombers twice raided Dilli, Portuguese Timor.

U.S.A.—U.S. bombers damaged three Jap transports off Agattu Island, W. Aleutians.

MR. CHURCHILL'S THIRD VISIT TO AMERICA

Arriving in America on June 18, Mr. Churchill held in Washington a number of conferences with President Roosevelt and the American and British advisers. On his return to London on June 27 a joint statement was made public, of which the following are the main points.

In the matter of production of munitions of all kinds, the survey gives on the whole an optimistic picture. The previously planned monthly output has not reached the maximum, but is fast approaching it on schedule.

Transportation of the fighting forces, together with the transportation of munitions of war and supplies, still constitutes the major problem of the United Nations.

While submarine warfare on the part of the Axis continues to take a heavy toll of cargo ships, the actual production of new tonnage is greatly increasing month by month.

The United Nations have never been in such hearty and detailed agreement on plans for winning the war as they are today.

Detailed discussions were held with our military advisers on methods to be adopted against Japan and for the relief of China.

While our plans, for obvious reasons, cannot be disclosed, it can be said that the coming operations which were discussed in detail at our Washington conferences, between ourselves and our respective military advisers, will divert German strength from the attack on Russia.

The Prime Minister and the President have met twice before, first in August 1941 and again in December 1941. There is no doubt in their minds that the over-all picture is more favourable to victory than it was either in August or December of last year.

JULY 3, Friday *1,035th day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced that ships lost in Malta convoy attacks in June were cruiser Hermione, destroyers Bedouin, Hasty, Grove and Airedale and Polish destroyer Kujawiak. Australian destroyer Nestor also lost.

Russian Front.—Evacuation of Sevastopol announced by Russians. Large-scale German attacks at Kursk, Bielgorod and Volchansk.

Africa.—Our forces counter-attacked in El Alamein area.

U.S.A.—Kiska, Aleutians, again attacked by U.S. bombers.

JULY 4, Saturday *1,036th day*

Air.—Six planes manned by U.S. airmen took part in joint attack with R.A.F. on aerodromes in Holland.

Russian Front.—Heavy fighting continued at Kursk, Bielgorod and Volchansk.

China.—U.S. bombers raided aerodrome at Canton.

Australasia.—Allied aircraft made heavy raids on Lae and Salamaua.

U.S.A.—U.S. submarines torpedoed three Jap destroyers at Kiska and one at Agattu, Aleutians.

JULY 5, Sunday *1,037th day*

Africa.—Our land and air forces continued to attack in the area of El Alamein.

U.S.A.—U.S. submarine torpedoed Jap destroyer near Kiska, Aleutian.

JULY 6, Monday *1,038th day*

Russian Front.—Russians retired at some points W. of Voronezh. North of Orel Russians launched attack.

Burma.—Enemy troop concentrations on Chindwin River bombed by R.A.F.

Australasia.—Allied bombers raided Lae and Salamaua and made night raids on Solomons and Dutch Timor.

JULY 7, Tuesday *1,039th day*

Russian Front.—Fierce fighting round Voronezh and Stary Oskol; Germans claimed capture of Voronezh.

Mediterranean.—Twenty-five Axis aircraft shot down over Malta in 24 hours; R.A.F. bombed Messina by night.

Africa.—Mobile columns engaged enemy at El Alamein; intensive bombing by our air forces.

Australasia.—Jap bombers raided aerodrome on Horn Island, Torres Straits.

Home.—Maj.-Gen. C. Spaatz appointed to command U.S. air forces in Europe.

Editor's Postscript

FOR some months now the swiftly moving events of the War have made it impossible to keep pace with their speedy recording in the more carefully compiled pages of our fortnightly issue, especially since wartime exigencies have imposed certain working conditions upon us which could never obtain in peacetime. That is why our text pages have recently undergone a change which is designed to keep our readers fully acquainted with the progress of the War in all essential details as seen through the eyes of our expert contributors at the time of writing. But readers should remember that at least a fortnight must elapse between our going to press and their reading our pages. The B.B.C. bulletins and the daily papers keep everyone supplied with the "hot" news, while THE WAR ILLUSTRATED comes along each alternate Friday with its balanced contents of picture, chronicle and comment, building up steadily into a unique pictorial record of the War. That has been its function since its first number, but during its weekly issue and while almost normal conditions of production continued, our pages trod more closely on the heels of the news, a fact which had the defects of its merits whenever the battle fronts became "fluid," as in some sections of the Russian front and later in Libya.

OUR changed treatment has met with general approval, judging from the many complimentary notes I have received from readers, though I deliberately discourage correspondence now on account of the paper situation—and postage costs. And the fact remains that whoever finds himself, when the War is over, in possession of a complete set of THE WAR ILLUSTRATED, will have a unique collection of contemporary chronicle enriched with an immense and well ordered photographic record which is not only beyond all rivalry at present, but is secure from any future competition. In the War of 1914-18 much the same thing happened, in even more remarkable circumstances, for out of a dozen weekly competitors of THE WAR ILLUSTRATED of that historic time I had the editorial satisfaction of seeing only one surviving at the date of the Armistice! Today THE WAR ILLUSTRATED stands alone in its field, and, despite difficulties unimagined in 1939, enjoys a circulation substantially greater than its precursor of 1914.

HOW'S this for a bit of bright bureaucracy? A commercial printer known to me has a large and weighty piece of machinery which has seen forty years' service and is now little better than junk. It can no longer be used with economy. In a London showroom stands a similar machine of more modern design, unused, and for sale. This the printer found after much searching. He agreed to buy it and turn in his old machine as metal replacement for salvage. The dealer has been flatly refused permission to sell, though the Government department concerned has been provided with all details of the proposed transaction. Thus the printer cannot continue economically to use his worn-out machine for essential commercial stationery, the owners of the new machine have to let it stand idle in their showroom, and the Iron Salvage is deprived of a valuable free contribution. The Salvage sleuths would probably prefer to snaffle some antique iron gate or railing; indeed, two or three gates would be needed to provide an equal weight of metal which this printer is anxious to part with. What fun we are going to have after the War eliminating this sort of bureaucratic nonsense!

ON the principle of trying anything once, I occasionally buy some publication whose contents I feel will offend my intelligence, just to see "what fools these mortals be." I shall not particularize my latest purchase beyond remarking upon its strident advocacy of superstitions, which flourish whenever trouble breeds credulity. A study of its pages provided me with a good half-hour's diversion, and especially with this gem of wisdom introducing an elaborate astrological study by that noted seer Mr. R. H. Naylor:

"Nobody drives a car with his eyes shut: none is so foolish as to ride a bicycle blindfold. Fighting a war is infinitely more dangerous than driving a car or riding a bicycle. All the more imperative, therefore, to look where we are going. And, believe me, mankind faces that which cannot be estimated or understood from past mass-experience."

How perspicacious! Believe me, tomorrow will be Friday, for I'm writing on a Thursday.

ALTHOUGH much that the periodical in question contains is offered under the pretence of "Science" I would suggest that "Superstition" would be a more fitting general title for it than the one it bears. Indeed, I have been shocked at the evidence which it provides for the growing mental confusion of the age. As significant as any of its literary contents is an advertisement offering any reader for 2s. 9d. a gold-plated amulet which contains "nine drops from a famous Wishing Well" (unnamed) and has the peculiar merit of enabling its possessor to secure the fulfilment of nine wishes. One of its purchasers has already won £30, another picked up the "Unity Pool" (whatever that may be), and yet another has wished for a thing which she didn't expect to get and yet she got it! This strikes me as pretty good value for 2s. 9d., especially the gold-plating, as last week I noticed a jeweller in Victoria Street was offering 39s. 6d. in exchange for one sovereign! But I had always thought that the traditional number of wishes was three, as in "The Monkey's Paw" and a multitude of other cautionary tales. Possibly the nine drops from that Wishing Well represent a generous reserve in case of some failures. The best of well-wishers, or wishing-wellers, could hardly expect to find in every wish a good egg.

Lt.-Gen. R. G. W. H. STONE, D.S.O., M.C., who has been appointed G.O.C. of the British troops in Egypt. He was formerly Assistant Commandant, Sudan Defence Force. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

NOT long ago I had evidence of how very near one can be to the scene of a lively air raid without knowing anything about it. Visiting friends in a certain village which lies something less than ten miles from a much bombed seacoast on a day of real June sunshine, we were enjoying the quietude and beauty of the scene so keenly that the common feeling of the company in that walled garden of old-world fragrance was: How distant seemed the horrors of war from such a haunt of peace! But a visitor arriving shortly after tea brought the news that there had been a sharp raid on the nearest coast town, with some casualties and a fair amount of material damage—and this was going on while we sat there rejoicing in our peaceful environment. Yet in five or six minutes the attacking bombers could have been over our tea-party, once again demonstrating the advantage of living in the country, where houses are few and scattered and objects worthy of bombing fewer still.

IN my own rural retreat, during recent months, there was much to tempt my pen to lyrical comment upon many unsuspected charms of country life and the manifestations of Nature. Though lack of space restricts such observations as I would like to set down, I must allow myself a passing remark on the perversity of Mother Nature. While hedges of recently planted cypresses, reared with tender care and transplanted at the right time, were roughly handled by the unexpected cold winds that came out of season and destroyed many of the young bushes, turning their vivid green of life into the rusty red of death, I had to arrange for the felling of several rows of beautiful willow trees whose luxuriant growth had seriously overshadowed our kitchen garden last year. Each one of these numerous willow trees had been originally a rough, rootless post, from which only the bark had not been stripped, used for the support of garden fencing, and yet without exception they had all struck roots and developed into graceful trees whose branches reached 20 feet high!

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